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THE NEW YORKER

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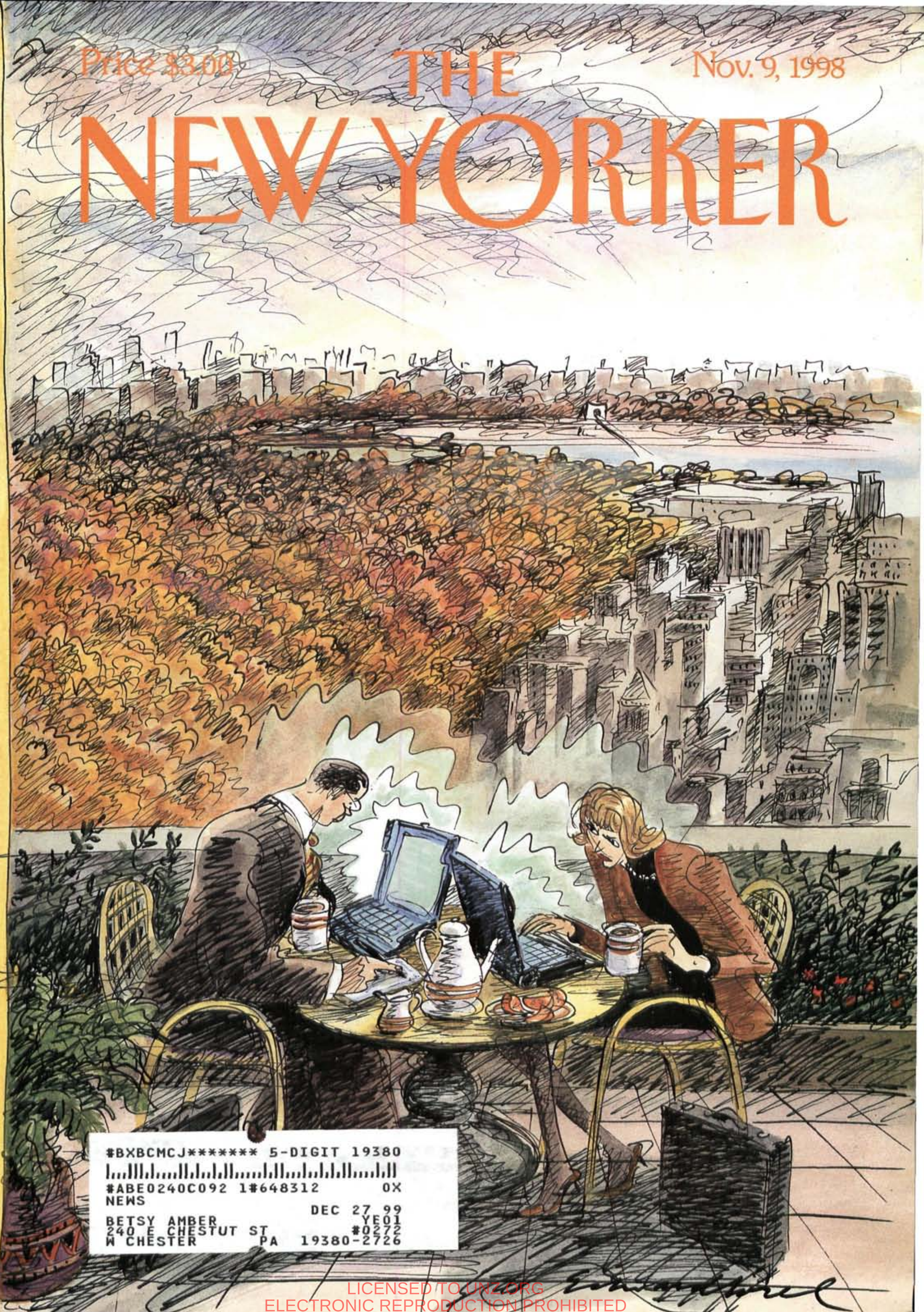

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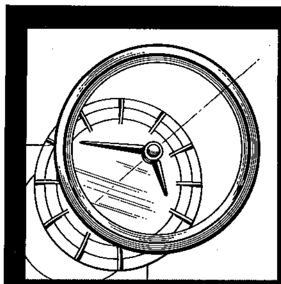

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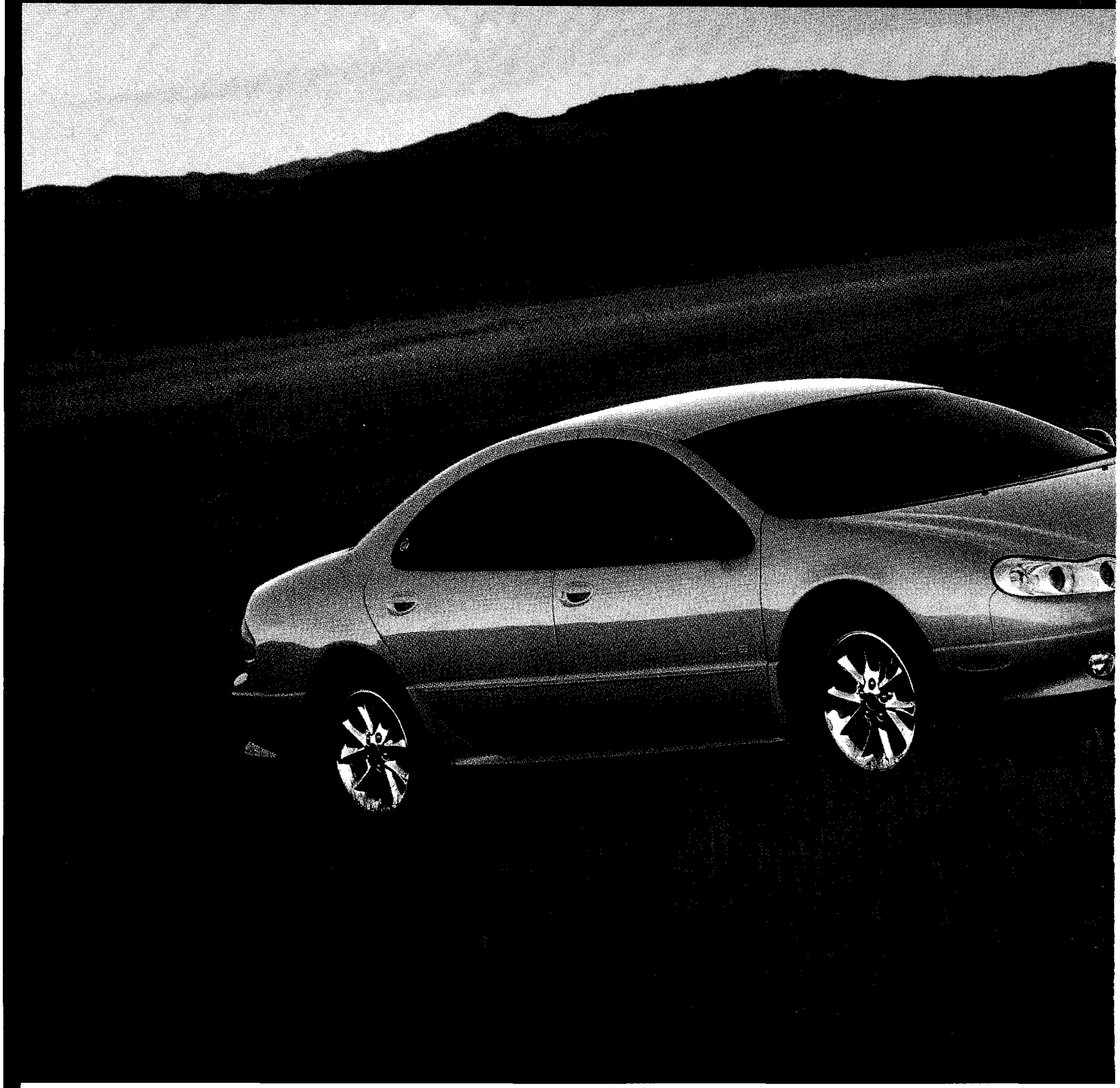

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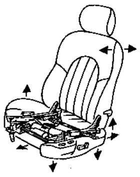

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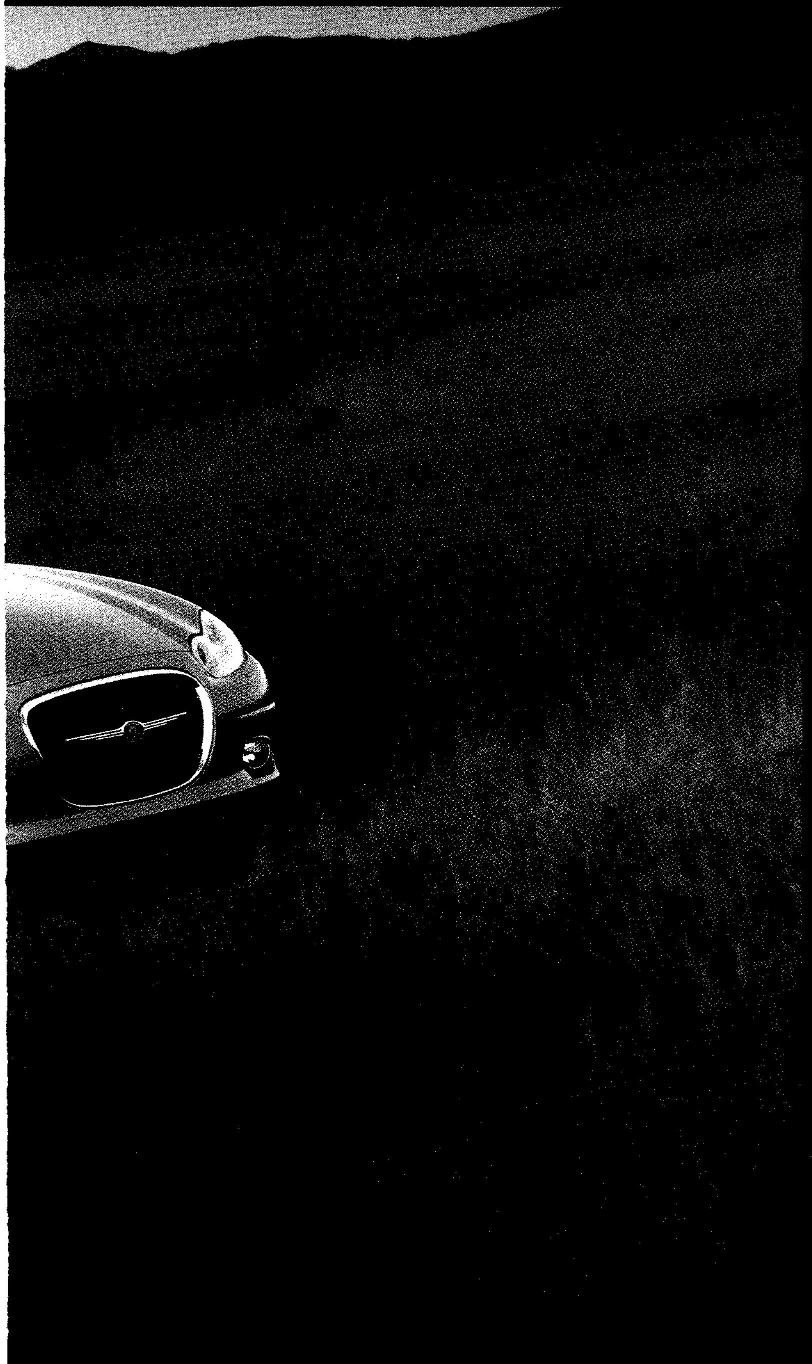

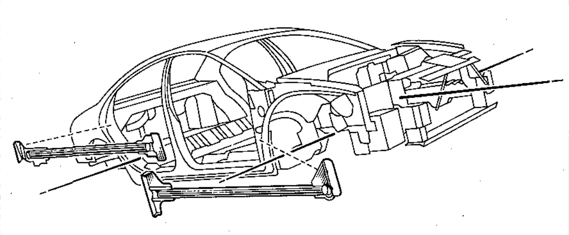

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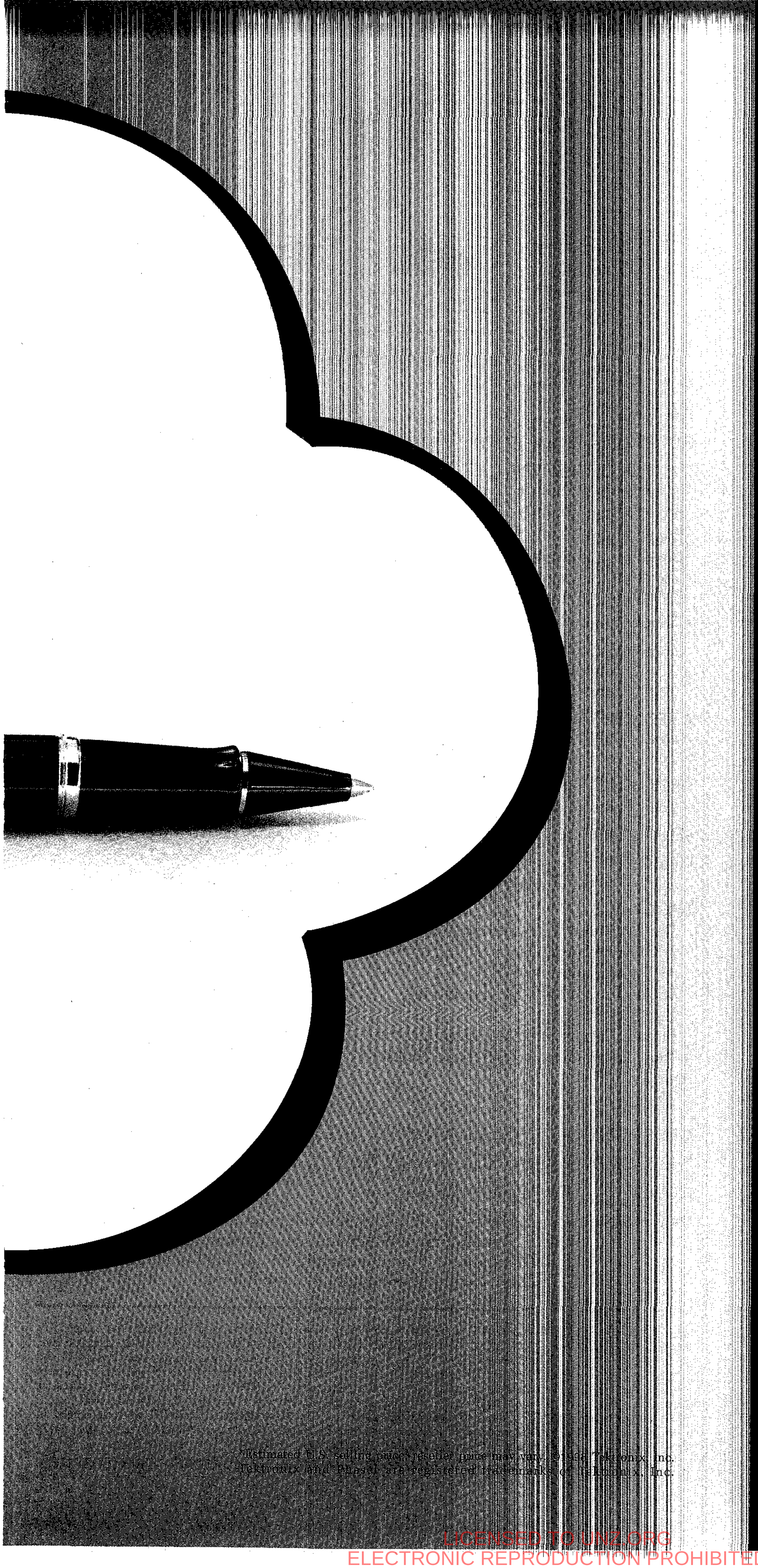

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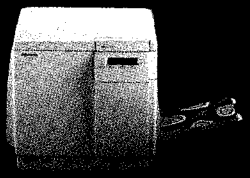

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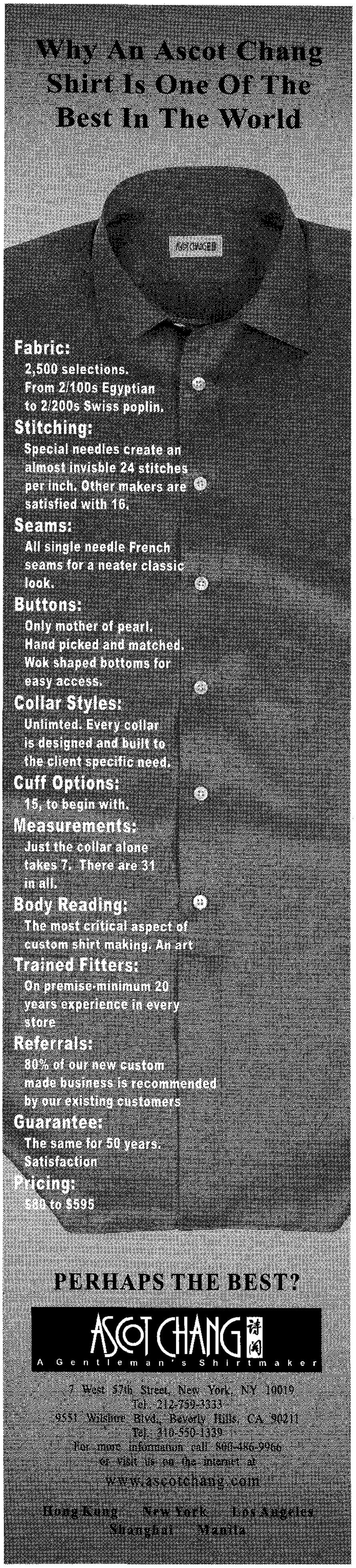

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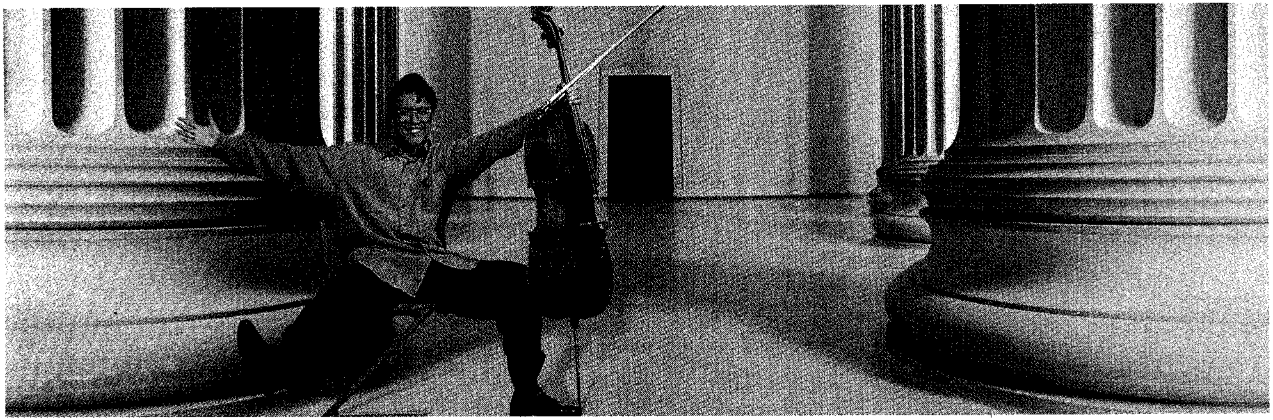

YO-YO MA BELIEVES THE BEST INSTRUMENTS ARE ITALIAN, MADE IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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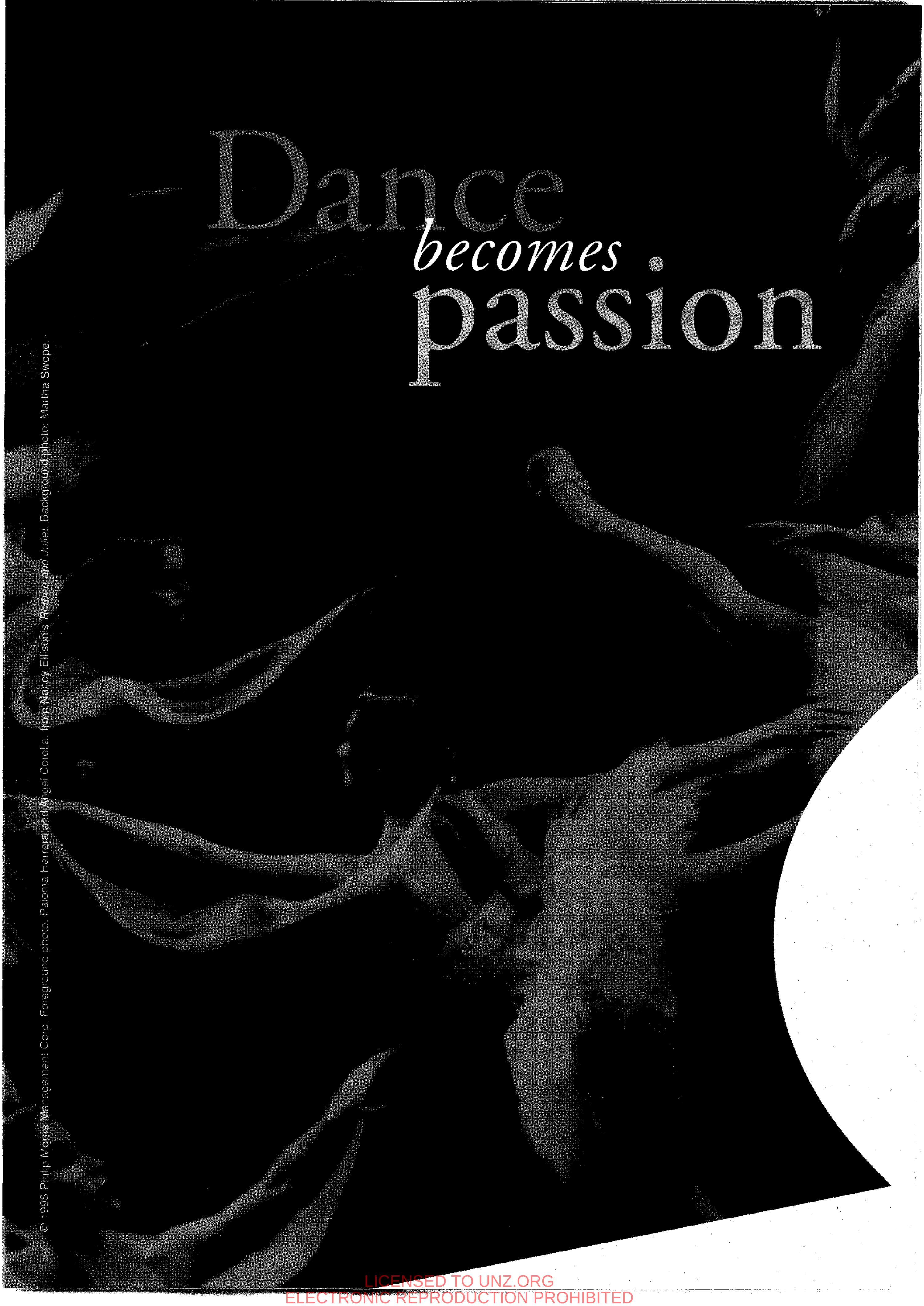
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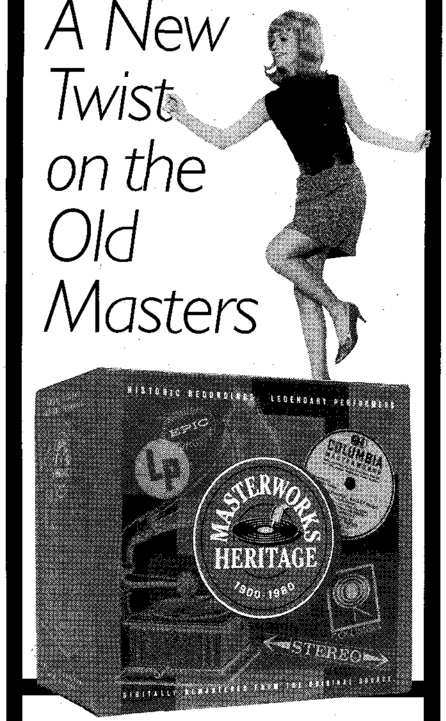
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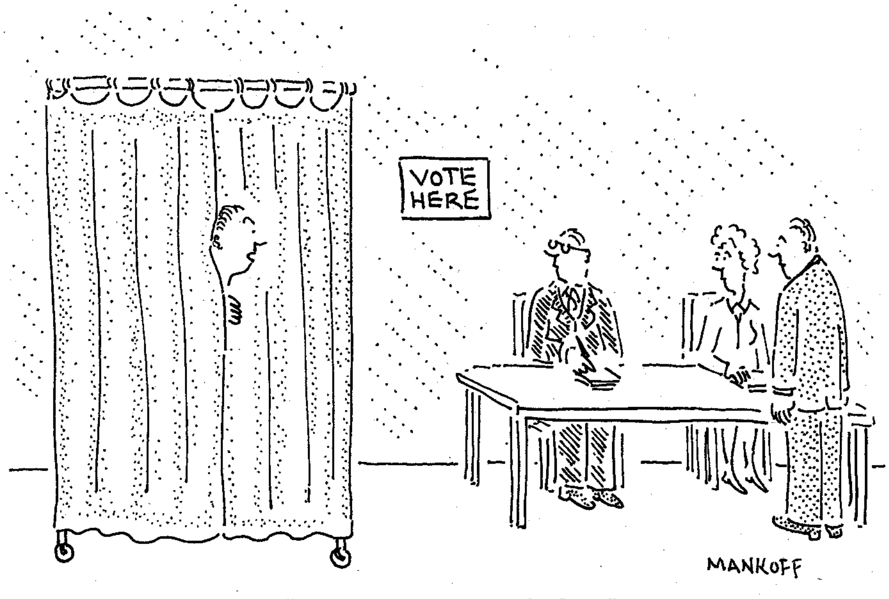

"Hey! There's no soap in here."

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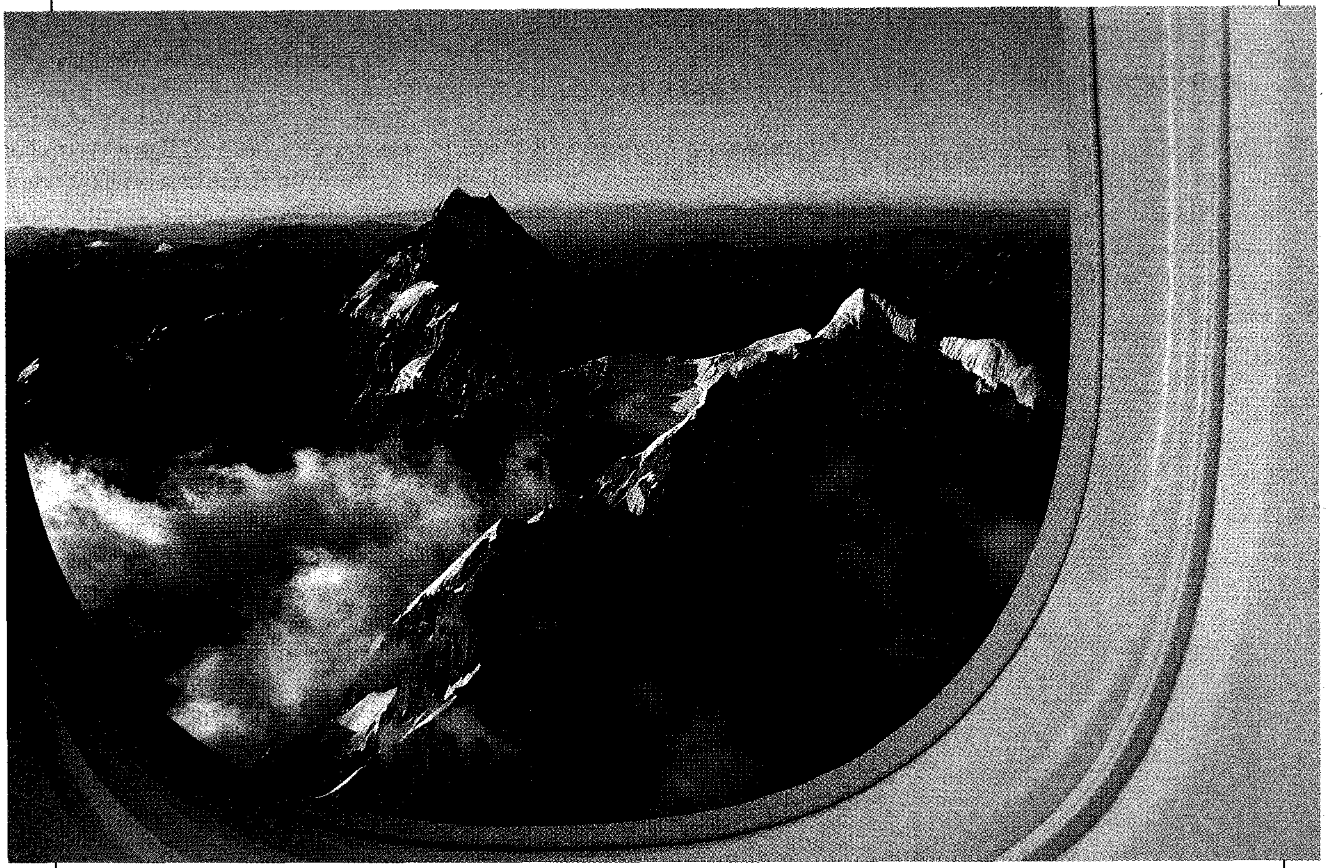

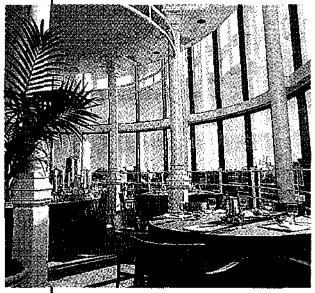

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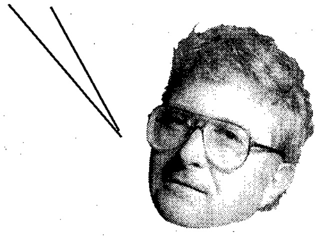

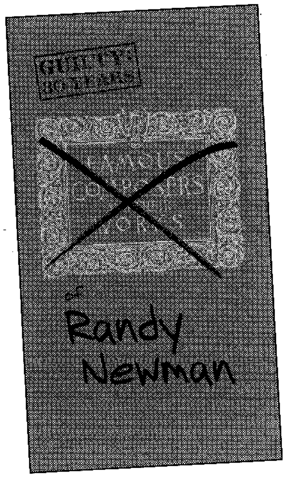

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SOUTHERN MANNERS

Claudia Roth Pierpont's "A Perfect Lady," about Eudora Welty (A Critic at Large, October 5th) was delightful, but was written by an outsider to the Jackson, Mississippi, society in which Welty has spent most of her eighty-nine years. As an insider, I can offer a caveat to Pierpont's conclusions about imbalance in Welty's work. I didn't have the courage to endure that society; it takes enormous energy to maintain the historically required veneer of loyalty and charm as a guard against the suppressed truth, hostility, and violence that can bubble up in it at any time. So it is no accident that Welty's most remarkable confessions, such as that of the Bible-thumping Uncle Nathan, who has amputated his own hand as punishment for having killed a man, but is willing to "let 'em hang a sawmill nigger for it" (in the novel "Losing Battles"), appear to be throwaway passages of stark truth embedded within the banalities, inanities, inferences, and delicacies of daily conversation. That is the way things have always been in Mississippi, and Welty deserves even more accolades for being able to chronicle that society so articulately and accurately. Welty may not be as outspoken as some of the other Mississippi writers of her generation, but her path may be the more arduous one.

Amelia L. Montjoy
Washington, D.C.

Ms. Pierpont's account of the price that Eudora Welty has paid to survive in Jackson reminded me of an incident during a short visit of mine to the city in 1961. Three other Episcopal priests and I were waiting in a downtown hotel for money from our bishops to bail out fourteen colleagues who had been jailed for integrating the bus terminal. A white, middle-aged, middle-class Jackson couple came to our rooms to thank us for what we were doing. Amazed, we asked how many of their peers felt as they did. They answered, "We have no idea. No one ever dares to talk."

Rev. Cornelius Hastie
Boston, Mass.

NORTHERN MANNERS

In "The Scarlet Professor" (Life and Letters, October 5th) Barry Werth lionizes Newton Arvin as a brilliant scholar who was tortured and ultimately crucified for his sexual tastes at the hands of an oppressively intrusive and homophobic small-town police force. Certainly the tactics that were used to corner Arvin were absurd (and they illustrate a classic case of societal paranoia about homosexuals), but Arvin's own subsequent behavior was shameless. Werth mentions that Arvin needlessly ratted on his circle of friends and that he had the resources and the connections to leave Northampton for a more suitable existence elsewhere. Arvin instead chose to wallow in his self-imposed isolation and pathetic self-pity. It is ironic that such a brilliant man was unable to dissociate his own life from the struggles in the fiction he revered.

T. S. Folke
Chicago, Ill.

SHAW'S NOBEL

Michael Specter's account of Nobel Prize hits and misses (Letter from Stockholm, October 5th) overlooks the most unusual case of George Bernard Shaw, who was turned down several times before he was awarded the prize after writing "Saint Joan." Although he won the 1925 prize, it was not awarded until 1926, thereby leading Shaw to inform the newspapers that "I wrote nothing in 1925, and that is probably why they gave it to me."

Rhoda Nathan
President
The Bernard Shaw Society
New York City

•

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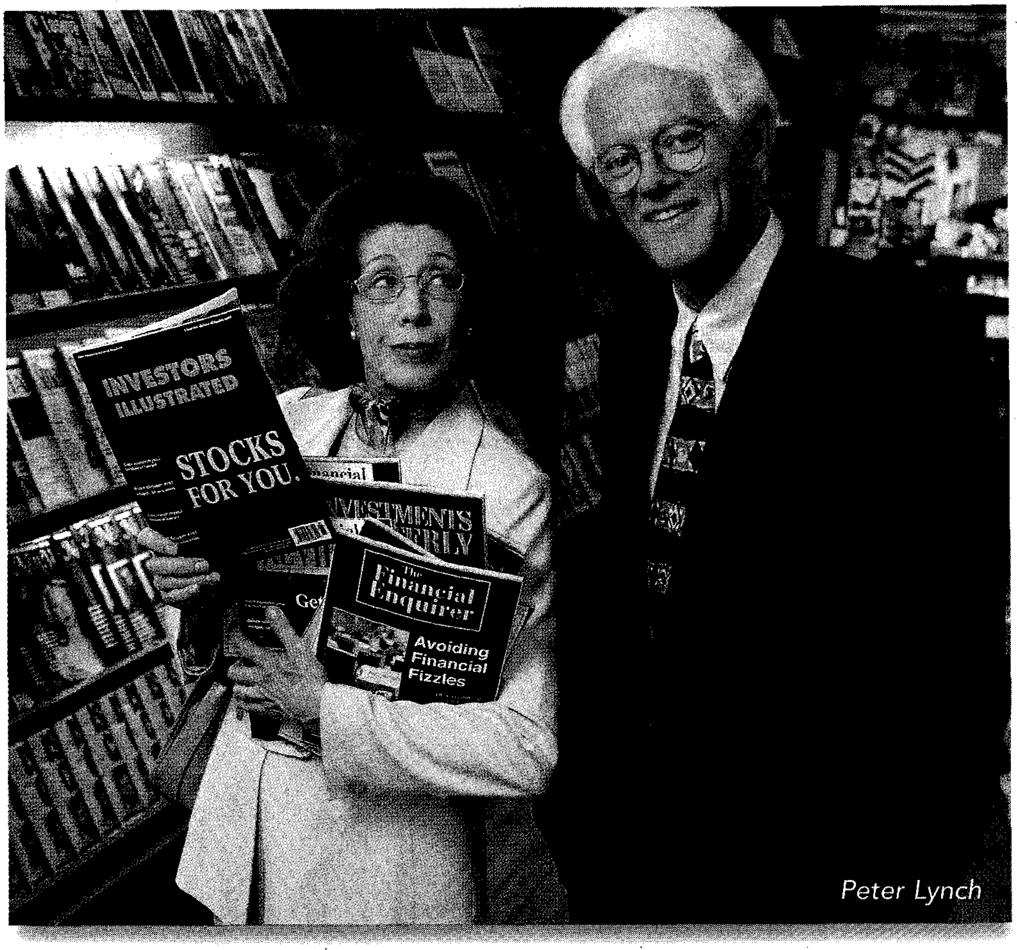
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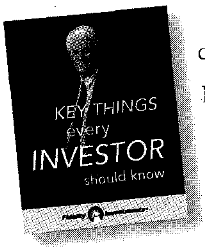
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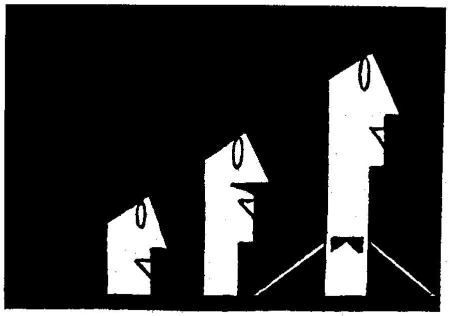

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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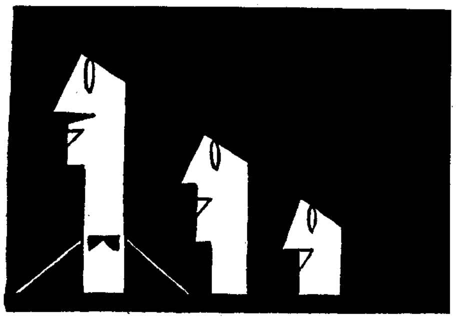


THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Americana Absurdum—Eight actors portray thirty characters in Brian Parks's lampoon of American culture. Nov. 4-7 at 8. Continues through Nov. 28. (Present Company Theatorium, 198 Stanton St. 420-8877.)

I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!—Sandra Bernhard arrives on Broadway with an updated version of her latest one-woman show. Preview on Nov. 4. Opens Nov. 5 at 6:45. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Knee Desires the Dirt—Women's Project and Productions begins a season of plays about "out-of-control moms" with this one by Julie Hebert. Opens Nov. 4 at 8. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

Krapp's Last Tape—Beckett's 1958 one-act, presented by the Irish Repertory Theatre. Preview on Nov. 4. Opens Nov. 5 at 8 and runs through Nov. 29. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

Little Me—Martin Short and Faith Prince star in a revival of the 1962 musical comedy by Neil Simon (book), Cy Coleman (music), and Carolyn Leigh (lyrics). Direction and choreography are by Rob Marshall. In previews. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300.)

The Memory of Water—Three sisters are reunited by a death (their mother's), in a comedy by the British playwright Shelagh Stephenson. In previews through Nov. 8. Opens Nov. 10 at 7:30. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

The Miser—A Pearl Theatre Company staging of Molière's comedy. In previews through Nov. 8. Opens Nov. 9 at 7. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

On the Town—The New York Shakespeare Festival's revival of the 1943 Comden and Green classic makes its move to Broadway. George C. Wolfe is the director, Keith Young the choreographer. In previews. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

The Primary English Class—Gerald Gutierrez directs Israel Horovitz's 1976 play, which stars Didi Conn as a total-immersion English teacher. In previews. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

The Ride Down Mt. Morgan—A bigamist (Patrick Stewart) is exposed when his two wives (Frances Conroy and Meg Gibson) visit him in the hospital, in a drama by Arthur Miller. David Esbjornson is the director. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

The Shaughraun—The nineteenth-century playwright Dion Boucicault's melodrama, staged by the Irish Rep. In previews. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

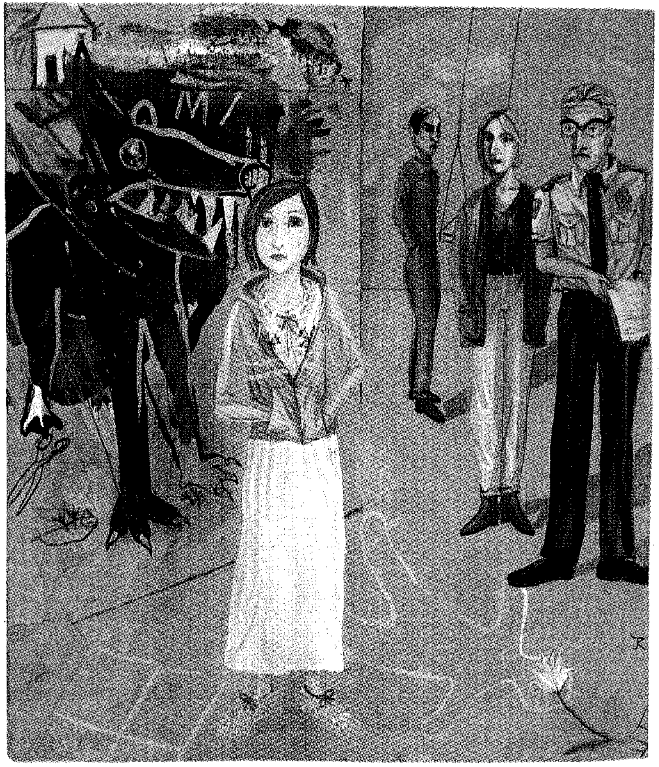
Spalding Gray—The monologuist returns to P.S. 122 with his work in progress, "Morning, Noon & Night." Nov. 9 at 8. Continues, Mondays only, through Dec. 21. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Trainspotting—Harry Gibson's 1994 adaptation of Irvine Welsh's novel about a group of Edinburgh junkies. In previews. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 239-6200.)

Waiting for Godot—Christopher Lloyd, Tony Shalhoub, and John Turturro take on Beckett's tragicomedy. Previews begin Nov. 10. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Collected Stories—Despite a splendid performance by Uta Hagen, as an aging writer who tells her protégée (Lorca Simons) the one story about her own life which she hasn't written, this revival of Donald Margulies's 1997 drama only points out how poorly constructed the relationship between the two women is. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)



Hilary Bell's "Wolf Lullaby," at the Atlantic Theatre.

JULIA KUHL

Communicating Doors—A wonderful farce with a fairy-tale ending, by Alan Ayckbourn. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 13th St. 239-6200.)

Corpus Christi—Terrence McNally's new play, which tells the story of a homosexual Christ-like figure, travelled a rough road before its opening. The production was cancelled after religious groups protested and the Manhattan Theatre Club staff received death threats, but within a week, armed with the support of free-speech activists, a professional security firm, and the New York City Police Department, the theatre reinstated the play. Now here it is, and a monumentally unrewarding piece of work it is, too. McNally has squandered the wealth of some very promising themes: in two (very long) hours, he manages to trivialize both sexual and religious persecution. While protesters outside the theatre despair of McNally's soul, audience members who have witnessed his plentiful gifts in the past may despair of his imagination. Slackly directed by Joe Mantello, who four years ago staged McNally's secular and deeply spiritual "Love! Valour! Compassion!" on the very same spot. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/26 & 11/2/98.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

De La Guarda—Theatre as mosh pit. The Argentinean troupe herds you into a crowded space, performs undistinguished rock music, swings on ropes over your head, and splashes you until you're drenched. (Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.)

Duet! A Romantic Fable—The Adobe Theatre Company's amiable spoof of all things fifties, from lounge acts to monster movies to overwrought dream sequences, includes a very funny twist on the kiss-a-frog-meet-a-prince fairy tale. The cast is charming, and the direction, by Gregory Jackson and Erin Quinn Purcell (who also co-star) and Jeremy Dobrish, is not overwhelming—a big step in the right direction for Adobe. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 239-6200.)

Footloose—A musical adaptation of the 1984 film, co-written by Dean Pitchford (who also wrote the screenplay) and Walter Bobbie. With music by Tom Snow and lyrics by Mr. Pitchford. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Getting and Spending—Broadway is too much with us; evening and afternoon, / Waiting for the ending, we lay waste two full hours: / Little we see on the Stage that is ours; / We have given sixty dollars away—for someone, a sordid boon! (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Impossible Marriage—Holly Hunter leads the cast of Beth Henley's new drama, set in Savannah, about a young woman's marriage to a philandering older man. Stephen Wadsworth is the director. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300.)

Killer Joe—In Tracy Letts's graphic dark comedy, an American family striving for a better life—in this case, a bunch of losers living in a trailer outside Dallas—hires a hit man to help things along. Though the experience sometimes feels like being trapped in Sam Shepard's claustrophobic Nowheresville while being smacked around by Quentin Tarantino, the terrific production is so vividly unself-conscious that you hardly feel assaulted at all—in fact, you enjoy it. Scott Glenn and Amanda Plummer are billed as

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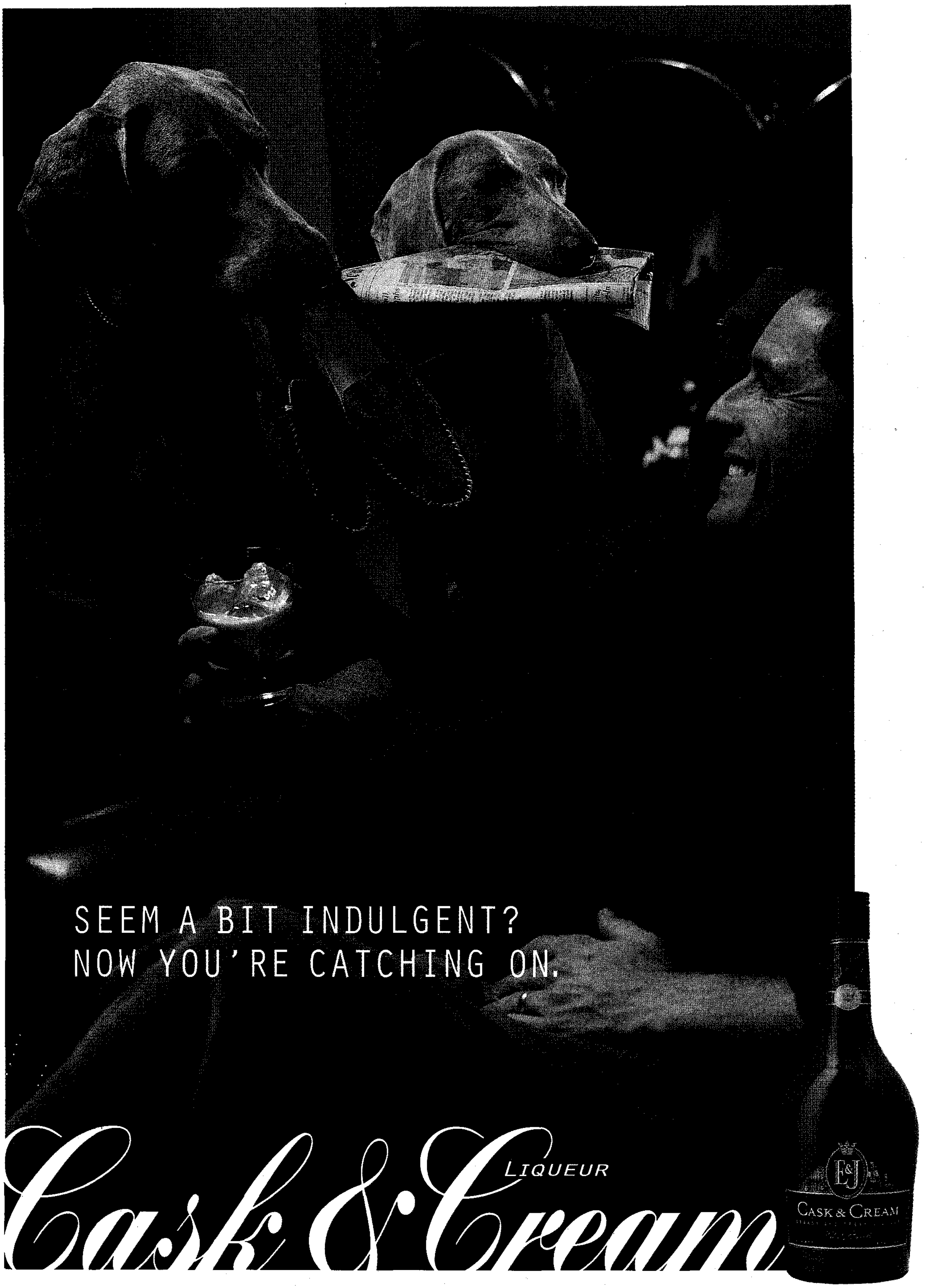
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the stars, but the whole cast is excellent. Wilson Milam is the director. (Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 239-6200.)

Kuni-Leml—The Jewish Repertory Theatre presents a musical about a nineteenth-century woman whose father promises her in marriage to a Hasidic scholar. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

The Mystery of Irma Vep—A revival of Charles Ludlam's 1984 camp thriller, directed by and starring Everett Quinton. Stephen DeRosa is also in the cast. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

A Night in November—A one-man drama starring Dan Gordon and written by Marie Jones, which is set on the night of the 1994 World Cup qualifying soccer match between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

The Old Settler—Leslie Uggams leads the cast in a drama by John Henry Redwood, set in Harlem in the forties. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

Over the River and Through the Woods—In Joe DiPietro's new comedy, a young man planning his future clashes with his four Italian-American grandparents. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Pericles—The Public Theatre's staging of Shakespeare's tragicomedy. (425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Premium Bob—The comedy duo, in a brief engagement of their new show. Nov. 4-6 at 10. Through Nov. 13. (Flea Theatre, 41 White St. 226-0051.)

Retribution—Dennis Christopher and Jack Laufer portray a pair of Auschwitz survivors, in a drama by Mark R. Shapiro. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Sakina's Restaurant—Aasif Mandvi plays six characters in his one-man exploration of the South Asian community in New York. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

Side Man—Warren Leight's nostalgic paean to mid-century jazz musicians has moved to a new theatre, with Christian Slater in the cast. Michael Mayer is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Swan Lake—The British choreographer Matthew Bourne's thrilling, iconoclastic version of the Tchaikovsky ballet takes the story of the troubled Prince who falls in love with a swan out of the realm of the folkloric and into the realm of Freudian nightmare, where obsession substitutes for enchantment. The simple but profound exchange of male for female swans sweeps away in one stroke the hidebound froufrou of the traditional version and releases enormous energy into the music. (10/19/98) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

Symphonie Fantastique—Abstract puppets underwater, set to the music of Berlioz. A peerless, delightful evening. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

This Is Our Youth—A dark comedy by Kenneth Lonergan. Mark Brokaw is the director. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Wit—Margaret Edson's funny, diamond-sharp first play manages to yoke together Donne's "Holy Sonnets" and ovarian cancer to make an original drama about the dignity of the spirit and the failure of modern medicine. Kathleen Chalfant, as the feisty English professor with only two hours to live and so many acid jokes to tell, gives one helluva fine performance. (MCC Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7765.)

Wolf Lullaby—A nine-year-old is accused of murdering another child, in a drama by Australian playwright Hilary Bell. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200. Closes Nov. 22.)

Zora Neale Hurston—A drama about the black American novelist, folklorist, and playwright. Written by Laurence Holder. Elizabeth Van Dyke has the title role. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

ART: Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CABARET:** Kit Kat Klub, 124 W. 43rd St. 719-1300. (The show closes here on Nov. 8. It moves to Studio 54 on Nov. 12.) . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **DINAH WAS:** Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH:** Jane Street Theatre, Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JEKYLL & HYDE:** Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **LATE-NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE LION KING:** New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **POWER PLAYS:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. . . . **RAGTIME:** Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. . . . **R & J:** John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 354-2220. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL:** Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **SECRETS EVERY SMART TRAVELER SHOULD KNOW:** Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **THE SOUND OF MUSIC:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TITANIC:** Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **VISITING MR. GREEN:** Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-0700.

LeRoy
King of Art

Everett Quinton and Stephen DeRosa, in "The Mystery of Irma Vep."

DANCE

American Ballet Theatre—Nov. 3 at 8: "Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1," "Known by Heart" (a new work by Twyla Tharp), and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 8: "Les Patineurs," "Spring and Fall," and "Sinfonietta." . . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 8: "Les Patineurs," "Known by Heart," and "Sinfonietta." . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 8: "Spring and Fall," "Grand Pas Classique," "Black Swan," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 2: "Variations for Four," "Leaves Are Fading," "Without Words" (a new work by Nacho Duato), and "Gala Performance." . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 8: "Spring and Fall," "Known by Heart," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 2: "Variations for Four," "Romeo and Juliet," "Spring and Fall," and "Rodeo." . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 7:30: "Les Patineurs," "Known by Heart," and "Sinfonietta." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Murray Louis and Nikolais Dance Company—The troupe offers three programs, the first featuring only works by Murray Louis, the second with four pieces by Nikolais and a lone Louis group work, and the third offering the two choreographers equal time. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Nov. 3-6 at 8, Nov. 7 at 2 and 8, and Nov. 8 at 2 and 7:30.)

Martha at Mother—The imperious Richard Move, whose six-foot-something version of Martha Graham perfectly captures the grande dame's high seriousness and fearlessly bad taste, opens the third season of this choreographic showcase with offerings from Ann Carlson, John Jasperse Company, Basil Twist, John Kelly, and Hernando Cortez & Co. Apparently, the ever-modern Martha is still a daunting and inspirational figure in the dance world: most choreographers performing here under her watchful eyelashes respond with some of their best (and briefest) work. (Mother, 875 Washington St. 642-5005. Nov. 4 at 8 and 10 and Nov. 5 at 8.)

Ronald K. Brown/Evidence—The choreographer Ronald K. Brown's fast and compact brand of movement often requires his dancers to stop on a dime and walk offstage in a casual strut; the effect of such power held in reserve is similar to the knockout punch that stops an inch short of your nose. For the last of his three weeks at D.T.W., Brown presents repertory works, including "My Brother," "Heaven/Home," "Woman Child," and "Caretaking." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Nov. 5-8 at 8.)

"Food for Thought"—Three members of the Danspace Project's Artist Advisory Board, Allyson Green, Sondra Loring, and Vickie Mendoza, each curate an evening of new work by veteran and rookie choreographers. That's the thought part; the audience is asked to supply the food (two canned items halve the ticket price) that goes to local charities. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Nov. 6-8 at 8:30.)

"Flare!"—The choreographer Maia Claire Garrison and M'Zawa Danz collaborate with the hip-hop vocal group INI Mighty Lock Down. Wyldeflowar, Rayza, and Yejide the Night Queen also contribute to the hour-long event, which is followed by a party. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Nov. 5-7 at 9:30.)

"Closed Encounters"—The choreographer Sue Hogan, who began her dance career creating routines for the California pompom championships, presents dance monologues, including "A Great White Room Environment" and "The Dialectic." (University Settlement, 184 Eldridge St. 924-0077. Nov. 7 and Nov. 9 at 8 and Nov. 8 at 5.)

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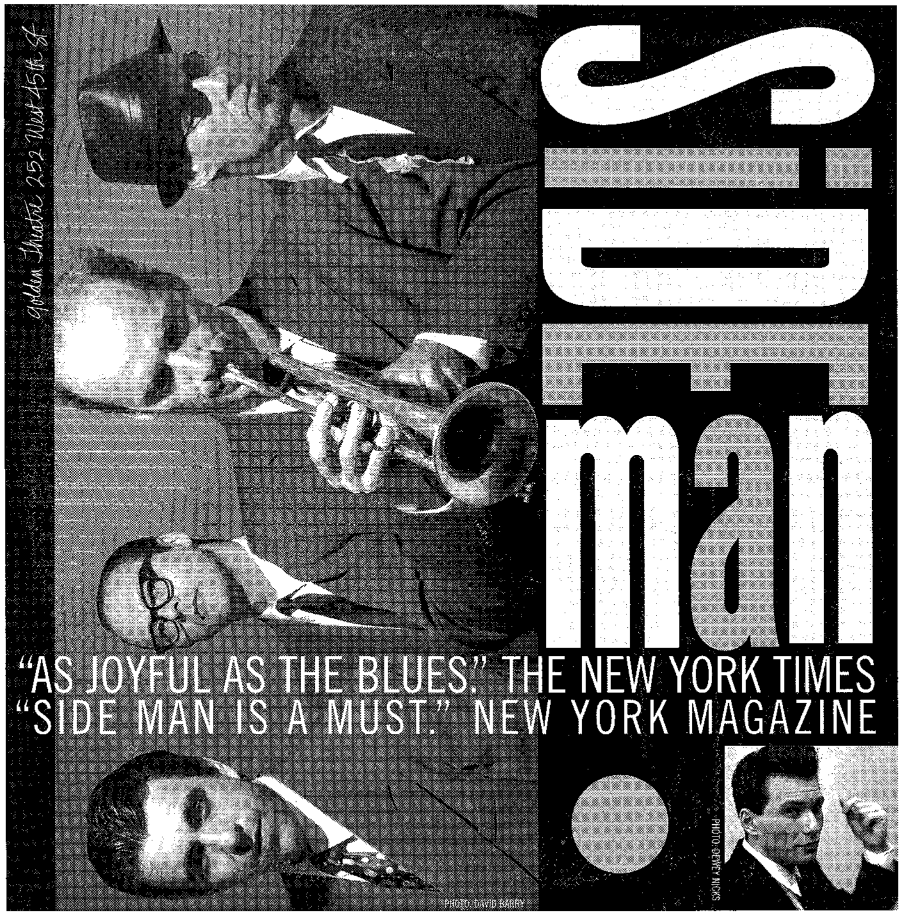
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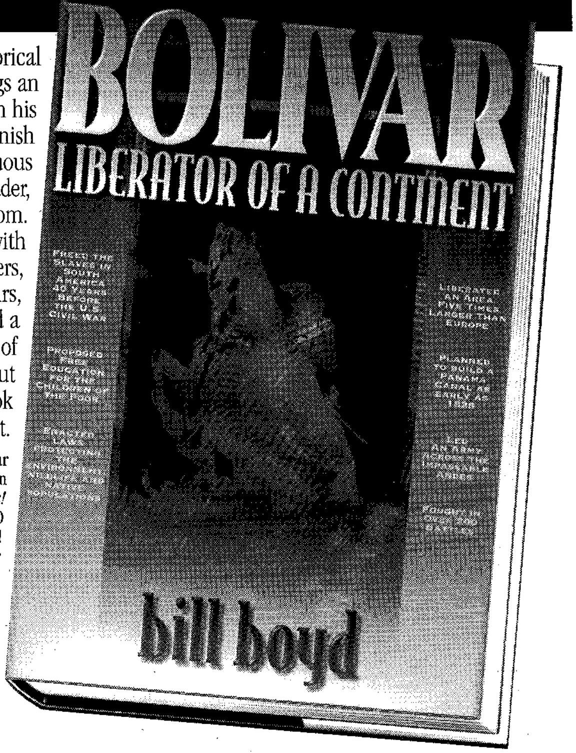
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SPI BOOKS

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

P. J. Harvey—She's a wee sprite from rural England who's been called the savior of rock and roll. Others dismiss her as the scowling offspring of Patti Smith and Emily Brontë. On her latest record, "Is This Desire?," Polly Jean Harvey perfects her interesting gift for morphing Delta-blues riffs into seismic waves; and she finally sings entirely in tune. During one memorable appearance, she stalked the stage in a cocktail dress like Marlene Dietrich with an electric guitar. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. Nov. 4 at 8.)

Cherry Poppin' Daddies—Playing swing music unsuitable for Gap commercials. With the Pietasters. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Nov. 5 at 7:30.)

Morphine—Makers of nifty guitar pop without a guitarist, Morphine mine's a miraculously rich vein of muscular riffs with nothing more than a two-string bass, saxes, drums, and Mark Sandman's dark, haunting vocals. (Hammerstein Ballroom. Nov. 5 at 7:30.)

Loudon Wainwright III and Kate and Anna McGarrigle—The sisters' new record, "The McGarrigle Hour," is a friends-and-family affair, with contributions from Kate's ex, Loudon, next-generation siblings Rufus and Martha, and Emmylou Harris, among others. Loudon is opening this show, so we're sure he'll be there, but even if the rest of the clan is busy (they do have careers, you know), Kate and Anna's delicate, almost brittle harmonies guarantee a memorable evening. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Nov. 7 at 8.)

Beth Orton and Ron Sexsmith—Two of the world's finest postmodern folkies. (Westbeth Theatre, 151 Bank St. 741-0391. Nov. 7 at 8.)

Lyle Lovett—Everybody's favorite Texas troubadour saunters into Lincoln Center. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 9 at 8.)

Barbara Cook—The great jewel of the cabaret scene, in a slightly larger setting. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Nov. 9 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Blarney Star, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Nov. 5: **John Gorka** and **Susan Werner.** Nov. 6: **Bo Diddley.** Those pounding tom-toms, those sinewy maracas, that distorted, fuse-blowing guitar. Call it hambone, call it shave and a haircut, two bits, call it anything you want, it's still going to be the Bo Diddley beat. And once it gets you in its clutches it's impossible to shake loose. Nov. 7: **Annie Haslam,** former vocalist for the band Renaissance. Nov. 9: **James Mc Murtry,** a Texas bar-stool historian (and son of novelist Larry Mc Murtry) who writes taut narratives about El Caminos and small towns swallowed up by big cities. With **Jeff Black.**

Bowery Ballroom, 6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—Nov. 4: The **Afghan Whigs.** This Cincinnati combo sometimes comes off slightly more clunky than funky. Which is not to say they're sterile: singer Greg Dulli chronicles his growing pains and aching heart with a howling falsetto, and the band has a nice way with big, sprawling guitars. Nov. 5: Having spent the early part of their career trafficking in soft-core lounge, the **Cardigans** have found their dark side on "Grand Turismo." It sounds almost like Garbage lite. The late show features **Sparklehorse,** the pet project of chimney sweep and slacker extraordinaire Mark Linkous. Through lazy rhythms and fuzz-box vocals, Linkous chronicles America as a kind of pleasant ruin; small towns and alluring widows appear in his songs as though seen through the dirty windows of a beat-up Dodge. Nov. 6: A double bill of topnotch alternative songwriting and hard-driving New Wave with **BUILT TO SPILL** and **MERCURY REV.** Nov. 7: The edgy urban folk tales of **RICHARD BUCKNER.** With the **MEKONS,** a tenacious Leeds combo that has evolved into a fine country-punk outfit. Their live shows can be sloppy, but they're never a disappointment. Nov. 9: Japanese sonic terrorist **CORNELIUS** has the stage.

ICE CREAM MAN: *He's in a hit movie! He still writes the songs that make the Bryn Mawr girls cry! He's Jonathan Richman, the proto-punk icon with the adenoidal voice who, two decades ago, eschewed electrified music because he feared it could hurt a baby's ears. "Sensitive" is an understatement. Richman can wring exuberant pathos out of anything, whether he's singing about Cézanne or insects, as he recently demonstrated in "There's Something About Mary." His new album, the Ric Ocasek-produced, Cuban-inspired "I'm So Confused," features a ballad called "True Love Is Not Nice," which has all the earmarks of an instant Richman classic. Expect the faithful to call out for it when he goes to Maxwell's on Nov. 8 and to Irving Plaza on Nov. 9, bringing with him past hits like "I'm a Little Airplane," "Pablo Picasso," and "I'm Straight."*

KAREN CALDICOTT

FEZ, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Nov. 4: **MAN . . . OR ASTRO MAN?** The space-age stowaways from Alabama who play lo-fi surf punctuated with sci-fi samples from the fifties. Nov. 5: The groovy Continental sounds of **HOOVERPHONIC.** Nov. 7: Australian postpunk folkie **BEN LEE** (also known as Claire Danes's boyfriend), postmodern rapper **MONEY MARK,** and the avant-hip-hop combo **BUFFALO DAUGHTER.** Later that evening **MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO** makes industrial dance music, with *über*-d.j. **JOSH WINK.** Nov. 9: **JONATHAN RICHMAN.** Nov. 10: The **VIOLENT FEMMES.** Though most people associate their angst-ridden acoustic punk with junior high, those lucky enough to have seen them in concert know that the Femmes (whose original incarnation was made up of Juilliard-educated musicians) is one of the best live bands of the past two decades. Not since the demise of the Feelies has a group channelled the ghost of the Velvet Underground so effectively. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Nov. 6: Beastie Boys collaborator **MIX MASTER MIKE** cuts faster. Nov. 10: Movie-soundtrack masters **SHUDDER TO THINK.**

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-0406)—Nov. 6: **BETH ORTON AND RON SEXSMITH** (see Concerts). Nov. 8: **JONATHAN RICHMAN** performs an afternoon show. That night the **MEKONS** (see the Bowery Ballroom) take over.

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Nov. 6: **MOMUS.** He lists Rabelais and Martial among his songwriting influences (with a side of Matthew Barney and Kubrick's "A Clockwork Orange"), and his music—from Brecht to Beck on Moog and simulated harpsichord—is suitably challenging. But live, draped on a chair and sporting a pirate eye patch, his obscurities coalesce and his sharp wit and smooth rap seduce. His songs, by the way, are quite dirty, as might be expected of someone who goes in for the Decameron, too. With Japanese superstar **KAHIMI KARIE,** who sleepily whispers sixties-style pop confections in French and Italian—except when she wakes up, straps on a pair of fur ears, and prowls the stage singing her hit, "I Am a Kitten." You'll fall in love. Also on the bill: the post-Abba kitsch of **KOMEDA** and the sunny-day garage-pop of **PAPAS FRITAS.**

LES POULETS, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and, now and then, a cha-cha. Dining.

S.O.B.'S, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Nov. 5: Norwegian trumpeter **NILS PETTER MOLVAER** lends his lyrical touch to **BASEMENT BHANGRA,** an evening of ecstatic, futuristic dance music which fuses an ancient Punjabi harvest festival with the technological wonders of underground London. Dining.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Nov. 6: **DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM.** Nov. 8: The **LEE BENOIT CAJUN BAND** sets them two-stepping for the evening.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Nov. 4: The **BOB MINTZER** quartet. Nov. 5-7: **JIMMY SCOTT.** Yet another major exception to F. Scott Fitzgerald's dictum about there being no second acts in American public life, Scott, the jazz-pop singer with the androgynously ethereal voice, finds himself in the midst of autumnal fame, forty or so years after first making waves. Few vocalists dare to luxuriate in the glacial tempos that Scott sets; fewer can cast his captivating spell. Dining.

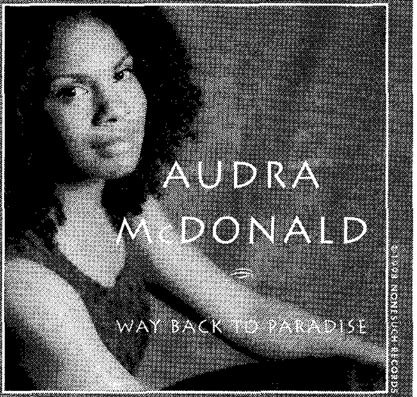
CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Dow may be unsettled, but **BOBBY SHORT** is back at the Café Carlyle through the New Year, and that's reassuring. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** is in attendance.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Nov. 8: The **PHIL WOODS** quintet. Woods breathes bop. An alto saxophonist who speaks fluent Parker while indulging his own alternately flashy and ripely romantic take on the music, Woods—forty years down the line—is playing better than ever. He's also held down a coiled small band for some three decades which is founded on Woods's now symbiotic relationship with his longtime drummer, Bill Goodwin. Mondays belong to electric-guitar innovator **LES PAUL.**

"Audra McDonald embodies everything that is best about contemporary Broadway singing."
The New York Times

" 'Way Back To Paradise' points to smarter times ahead for the Great White Way... There is no finer singer on Broadway."
TIME

AUDRA McDONALD
WAY BACK TO PARADISE



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JAZZ STANDARD, 116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—Through Nov. 8: The **VALERIE CAPERS** quintet. The presence of in-it-for-the-long-haul figures like pianist and vocalist Capers is a stabilizing force for jazz in this city. A peripheral figure for decades due to her deep involvement in jazz education, Capers deserves her long-overdue shot at recognition.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. Nov. 4-7: **JONNY KING** plays brisk, shrewd jazz piano, drawing on a host of superior models as he firms up his own increasingly authoritative voice. His simpatico partner is the in-demand bassist **DWAYNE BURNO.**

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—This jewel box high in the sky will shut down for good in mid-December, but glittering offerings are still to be found in the home stretch. **ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY,** opening a two-week stint on Nov. 3, is one of the easiest-to-enjoy singers in the jazz-pop business. Rhythmic fluency, velvet tone, and the ability to shift registers effortlessly—she's got all that, plus rare intelligence and imagination. She's been gaining note for some of her original compositions, but we have a special fondness for her way with the standards: listen to her 1996 release, "To Ella with Love" (on the After 9 label), and you'll see why. Some classic goodies figure on her current playlist, including "In a Sentimental Mood" and "Round Midnight." . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Hilary Kole. Closed Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through Nov. 8: The **AL FOSTER** quartet. Foster, a much valued drummer, has brought rhythmic sparkle to the bands of Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins and Joe Henderson, among many others. For his own turn to shine, he's enlisted two practiced players, pianist Renee Rosnes and bassist Larry Grenadier, and a wild card, a tenor saxophonist named John Nugent. Dining.

TONIC, 107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—Nov. 4: The **DAVE DOUGLAS** quartet. Trumpeter Douglas bridges the gap between tradition and innovation, and his music is always engaging, and often glorious. Nov. 5: Going it alone onstage is tough enough, but it takes experienced—and daring—players like **LEROY JENKINS** and **ZEENA PARKINS** to pull off solo performances on their respective instruments, the violin and the harp.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Nov. 8: The **HEATH BROTHERS.** Jazz has been blessed with two sets of three immensely talented brothers: the Joneses (Elvin, Thad, and Hank) and the Heaths, who occasionally reunite as the Heath Brothers. Saxophonist, flutist, composer, and arranger Jimmy is finally getting his due as one of the preëminent figures to emerge from the bop era; the estimable bassist Percy anchored the Modern Jazz Quartet until its recent demise, and drummer Albert (better known as Tootie) had long been one of the best kept of jazz secrets until his brief stint with the final edition of the M.J.Q. Blood ties obviously have something to do with the cohesion and grace that make the Heath Brothers—no matter how infrequently they reunite—one of the classic small groups. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

ZINC BAR, 90 W. Houston St. (477-8337)—A young guitarist with flying fingers and a heart filled with bebop, **RON AFFIF** has a semi-regular Monday gig at an intimate space that caters to guitar freaks—just right for a six-string whiz with almost too much to say. Saturdays feature Brazilian jazz.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Edgar Degas, Photographer." The Met has been exceptionally devoted to presenting the breadth of Degas's achievements: a massive retrospective several years ago; a more recent show that focussed on his landscapes; and last year's tremendous selection of works he collected. This year, we are treated to yet another aspect of this protean œuvre: photography. Degas first took to the new medium as a means of preserving the likenesses of friends and family but soon immersed himself in its aesthetic potential. The influence of photography on Impressionist painting has long been established; here Degas seems to be returning the favor, exploiting avant-gardist, painterly effects in the mechanical medium. The most compelling pictures document the intimate Degas circle—Renoir, Mallarmé, et al. Indeed, a symbolist aesthetic seems to pervade many of the best photographs, as shadowy figures emerge from the half-darkness, or distorted reflections are caught in mirrors. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ "Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance." The Milanese master armorer Filippo Negroli created lavish sculptures in steel, damascened in gold and silver, for the likes of Charles V and Henry II of France; these and other works by Negroli and his contemporaries are on display. Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ "Donato Creti: Melancholy and Perfection," seventeen paintings by the Bolognese classicist. Through Jan. 31. . . . ¶ "Charles Burchfield from the Collection." Through Feb. 21. . . . ¶ "Félix Vallotton: Woodcuts and Three Paintings." Through Feb. 21. . . . ¶ "Mary Cassatt: Drawings and Prints in the Met." Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ "From Van Eyck to Bruegel:

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Early Netherlandish Painting in the Metropolitan Museum." Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ "The Ceaseless Century: Three Hundred Years of Eighteenth-Century Fashion." Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ "The Nature of Islamic Ornament, Part II: Vegetal Patterns" identifies components of the arabesque—vine scrolls, blossoms, split leaves, and palmettes—in plant motifs from the ninth century to the eighteenth. Through Jan. 10. . . . ¶ "Ellsworth Kelly on the Roof." Through late fall. . . . ¶ "Jade in Ancient Costa Rica." Through Feb. 28. . . . ¶ "Sacred Visions: Early Paintings from Central Tibet." Through Jan. 17. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Jackson (Jack the Dripper) Pollock, hard-drinking Abstract Expressionist and unwitting inspiration for decades of grade-school art projects, shows off his mesmerizing gestures in more than a hundred paintings here, in the artist's largest retrospective to date. Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ In conjunction with the Pollock show, the drawings department has gathered some eighty works by New York School artists, from early Abstract Expressionist stuff by the young Rothko and Gorky to mature work by Rauschenberg and Johns. Through Jan. 12. . . . ¶ For his stint in MOMA's Project series, the conceptual artist Maurizio Cattelan has hired an actor to walk around afternoons during museum hours, from Nov. 6 through Dec. 4, in a giant Picasso head and suit (depicting the artist in his lovable bald, sandaled, French-sailor-sweater stage) greeting museumgoers. Press materials have suggested influences from Fellini to commedia dell'arte, but visitors will be more struck by the likeness to Mickey Mouse. . . . ¶ "Focus: Pollock and Printmaking." Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ "Dubuffet to de Kooning: Expressionist Prints from Europe and America." Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ "The Best Animals Are the Flat Animals," a video installation by Diana Thater. Through Nov. 10. . . . ¶ "New Photography: Jeanne Dunning, Olafur Eliasson, Rachel Harrison, Sam Taylor-Wood," the fourteenth installment of the museum's survey series. Through Jan. 12. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"Rendezvous: Masterpieces from the Centre Georges Pompidou and the Guggenheim Museums" includes works by Picasso, Matisse, Chagall, Kandinsky, and other modern masters. The joint exhibition allows side-by-side presentation of pieces that are usually separated by a transatlantic flight. Through Jan. 24. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

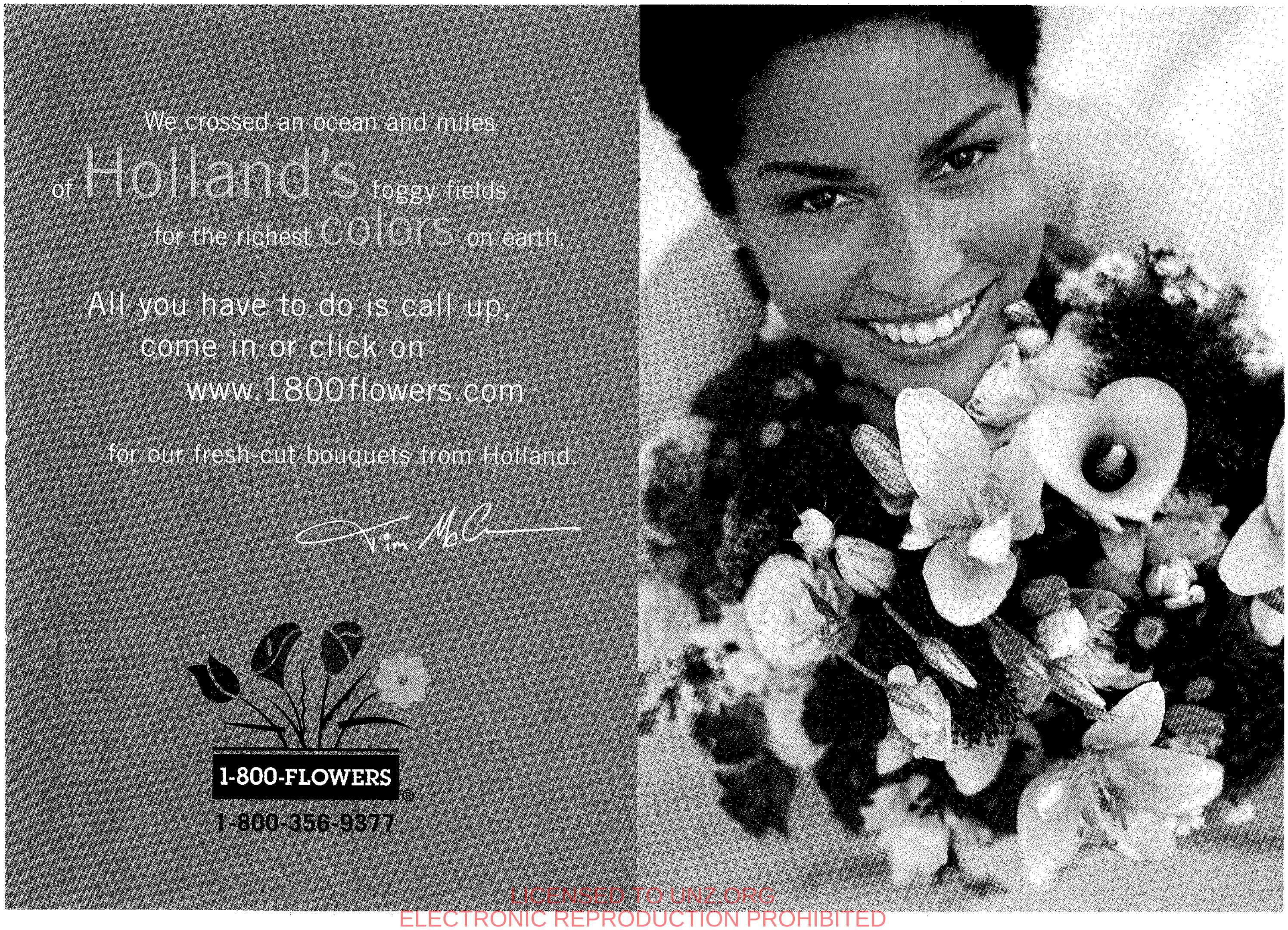
Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—"Premises: Invested Spaces in Visual Arts, Architecture, and Design from France, 1958-98," a complement to the uptown exhibition, presents the work of a variety of modern and contemporary French artists and architects, including Christian Boltanski, Yves Klein, Le Corbusier, and Jean Nouvel. Through Jan. 10. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The horizontal aspect of Mark Rothko's luminous, slightly spooky paintings of rectangles piled one above the other suggests affinities with nineteenth-century Romantic landscapes; on the other hand, the broad expanses of color and severe geometric reduction look forward to the color-field and Minimalist art of the sixties. The temptation at this retrospective is simply to take a bath in Rothko's luxuriant palette—to see him as an AbEx Bonnard. One should keep in mind, however, that the artist allied his art with the timeless and the tragic. Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ The first full-scale retrospective of the work of Bob Thompson, a psychedelic African-American appropriation artist whose brief and incendiary career was spent in the heyday of Abstract Expressionism. Through Jan. 3. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou" presents an astonishing array of objects—dolls, flags, rattles, pots, calabashes, medicine packets, paintings—more than five hundred in all, which bring to life the vivid history and practice of the Afro-Caribbean religion. Through Jan. 3. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch" offers some hundred large-scale court and religious paintings, manuscripts, and enamels done in the representational style that flourished under the dynasty that ruled Iran from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ "Kerry James Marshall: Mementos" includes intricate and allusive paintings and sculptures (as well as a new site-specific installation) by an artist whose work is informed by the civil-rights violence he witnessed in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963, and in Watts, in 1965. Through Nov. 29. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturday, Nov. 7, 11 to 11; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-5800)—"Claire McCardell and the American Look" brings out the practical ensembles that the designer called "comfort wear": play clothes, "Pop-Over"



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dresses, swimsuits, sportswear, and wrap-and-tie outfits suitable for the fashionably active American woman of the forties and fifties. Through Jan. 9. . . . ¶ "Rethinking Shearling." O.K. Who'd like to start? Through Jan. 9. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8; Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008)—Mr. Morgan's mansion is the ideal venue for road shows from major European cabinets, and "Master Drawings from the Hermitage and Pushkin Museums" is one of the best examples of this. Any exhibition that ranges from Holbein to Klee, from the Florentine Renaissance to Modigliani and de Chirico, necessarily lacks curatorial focus; what unifies this show is the supremely high quality of the works. Apparently, the Russians weren't out-collected by anyone. Through Jan. 10. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10:30 to 5; Fridays, 10:30 to 8; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—"'In thy map securely saile': Maps, Atlases, Charts, and Globes from the Lawrence H. Slaughter Collection" unrolls the richly detailed navigational guides used by sea captains and other New World explorers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, showing signs of careful use (pencil marks, pinpricks from compass needles) among their wind roses, scrolled cartouches, and coats of arms. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

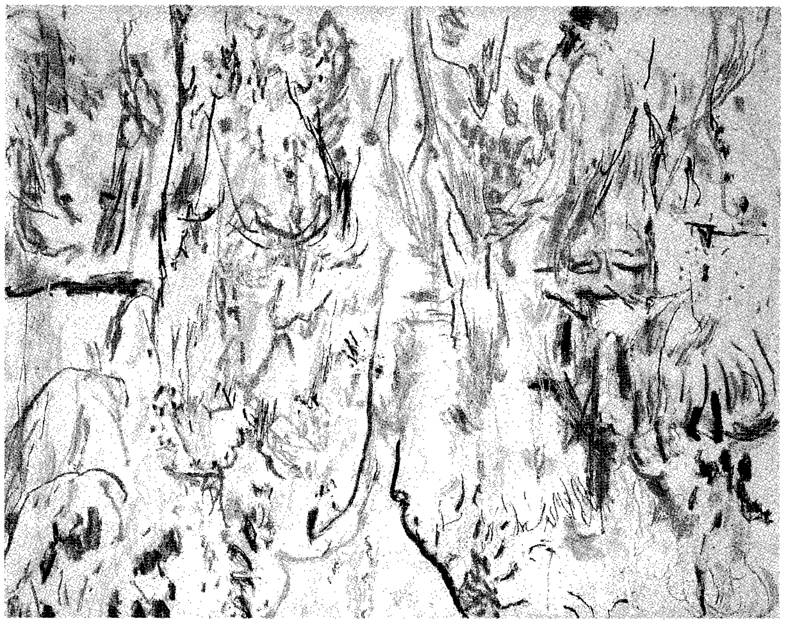
GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Will Barnet—Handsome geometric paintings from the forties, fifties, and early sixties, before Barnet settled into his current representational style. There are a lot of borrowings to sort out—from Stuart Davis, Native American design, and Milton Avery—but they blend effortlessly in the prevailing sleek modernism. The only break in Barnet's relentless composure occurs in a group of lovely small color sketches (painted on envelopes and party invitations) that provide a rare glimpse of a dandy in his shirt-sleeves. Through Nov. 14. (De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050.)

Henri Matisse (1869-1954)—Modestly scaled cast-bronze sculptures and a work in plaster. Matisse's sculpture represents both a departure from and a continuation of the concerns that animate his paintings, in that their inevitable tactile qualities work against a purely optical experience. As figures in the round, the sculptures are experienced as shifting, ambiguous surfaces. One of the highlights is the bronze "La Serpentine" (1909), an almost stringy nude, in which negative space defines the work as much as its mass does; it departs sharply from the conventionally sinuous voluptuousness of a work like "Madeleine I" (1903). Several other major works are on view, including "Grand Nu Assis" (1922-29). Through Dec. 12. (C & M, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020.)

Sigmar Polke—"Printing Errors," a suite of recent paintings by the artist who vies with Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer for the title of Most Famous Living German Artist. "Mixed-medium" is an understatement with respect to these works, which typically incorporate fabric supports, thick surfaces of translucent resin, even chicken wire. With his characteristic perversity, Polke assembled an archive of printing errors, which he then used as the basis for new paintings. Many of the pictures initially appear wholly abstract, when in fact they are based on representational images gone awry. Other works seem enveloped in symbolist fogs, and dislocations of figures suggest Surrealist oddities. One has to admire an artist who creates paintings of rare subtlety and beauty by resorting to the kind of materials that most others would simply discard. Through Jan. 16. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St. 988-1623.)



SUSAN HARTNETT: "Oct. 20 '95 60 degrees light sea breeze, light haze (Maine)," in a show of paintings at the Danese gallery through November 28.

COLBY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

Nature Poet—Susan Hartnett knew when she was twelve that she was going to be an artist. She got no encouragement from her family and, until recently, very little from anyone else. Now, at the age of fifty-eight, she is suddenly facing the improbable trauma of late recognition. The word on Hartnett spread in advance of her first solo New York show since 1985, which recently opened at the Danese gallery (41 E. 57th St.; 223-2227), and a number of her drawings and pastels, which nobody was interested in showing before, have been snapped up by museums and collectors.

For Hartnett, the prime mover was the sculptor Richard Serra, who visited her studio last spring, bought several drawings, and told Renato Danese to look at the work. What Serra and Danese saw were images of wild grasses—hundreds of charcoal drawings—and a group of large pastels (four feet by five) on colored paper. The charcoals were done from life, quickly, during Hartnett's drives up and down the Maine coast in her ancient Plymouth sedan. She'll drive for hours to find a remembered clump of bluejoint or Spartina, with its rhythmic interplay of curves and straight lines, and in some miraculous way her drawings catch the wind that animates them. Her pastels combine that sort of close observation with an abstract reordering and a rush of vibrant, saturated color that relates specifically to the season and the time of day.

Hartnett is a Manhattan country person who for years supported herself with part-time jobs at the Bronx Botanical Garden. She worshipped Pollock and de Kooning and Rothko but also fell in love with traditional Chinese landscape painting and with the works of Burchfield, Hartley, and earlier American landscapists. Her goal was to adapt the pictorial language of abstraction to the natural world as she saw it, and somehow she has pulled that off. "I'm just lucky," she said last week, "that I lived long enough to combine these streams, which to other people seemed antithetical."

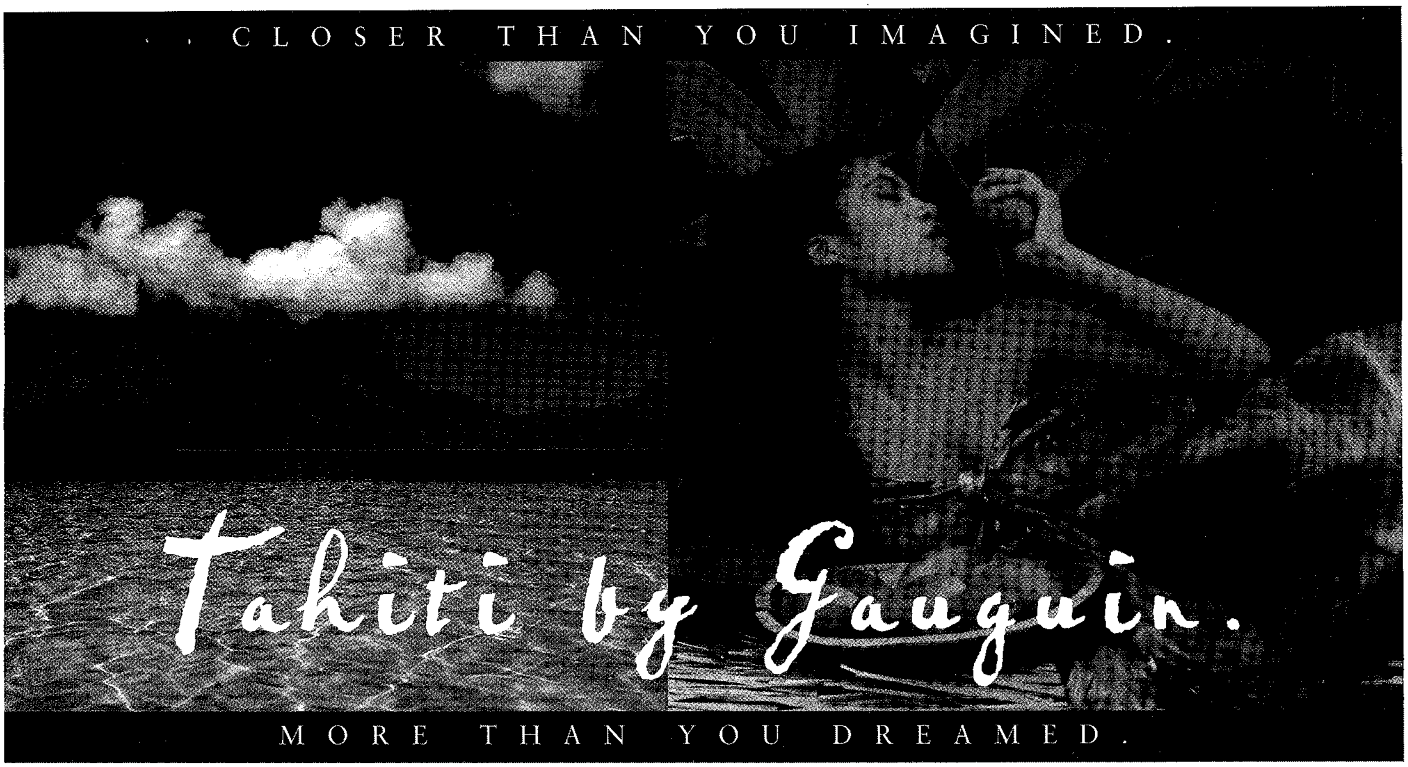
Joel Shapiro—Marching like stiff-armed race-walkers up the walls of the gallery—or tumbling down them—the latest generation of stick figures from this prominent sculptor project a goofy exuberance. Large and small, in dark bronze, blond wood, and a palette of bright leotard colors, they might be limbering up for aerobics class. But if Shapiro's sculptures can seem suspiciously accessible (especially when seen in isolation on a corporate plaza), we're won over here by their sheer formal versatility. Clunky, milled beams don't seem like an especially promising material, but Shapiro can make them kneel, stretch, slouch, and pirouette. Through Nov. 14. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292.)

Short List—**NICK BLOSSER,** Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. 861-7338. Through Nov. 28. . . . **WILLEM DE KOONING,** Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 1018 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 744-7400. Through Dec. 19. . . . **LESLEY DILL,** Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 644-5665. Through Nov. 17. . . . **MARCELLUS HALL,** Contemporary Illustrators Gallery, 320 E. 81st St. 452-2649. Through Nov. 8. . . . **AL HELD,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through Nov. 14. . . . **ROY LICHTENSTEIN,** Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. 489-3331. Through Nov. 28. . . . **ANN LOFQUIST,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. 664-0907. Through Dec. 2. . . . **HENRY MOORE,** James Goodman, 41 E. 57th St. 593-3737. Through Nov. 17. . . . **FAITH RINGGOLD,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. 644-8300. Through Nov. 28. . . . **JACKSON POLLOCK,** Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. 397-6780. Through Dec. 19. . . . **JULIUS STEWART,** Jordan, 958 Madison Ave., at 75th St. 570-9500. Through Dec. 5.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Louise Fishman—Gorgeous, solemn, abstract paintings in the tradition that descends from Pollock to Joan Mitchell. Fishman, who once mixed ash from Auschwitz into her paint, is occasionally prone to portentousness—that's part of the AbEx tradition, too—but here she seems to be simply enjoying herself. "Blue Stallion" and "Sparrow" are two of her finest paintings, full of rustling supple movements, like wind currents eddying across a wall of ivy. Through Nov. 14. (Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727.)

Maria Marshall—For her twenty-second-long video loop "When I Grow Up I Want to Be a Cooker," the artist filmed her two-year-old son in a sort of baby Bogey moment: the little nipper puffs on a cigarette, inhales deeply, then blows a perfect smoke ring. The sequence is shocking in a way that Serrano's polemical "Piss Christ" never was. It is rare to come across something that can



Just seven and a half hours from Los Angeles, you will find tiny worlds so breathtaking even the word paradise seems inadequate. Welcome to the islands of Tahiti aboard the sparkling new m/s Paul Gauguin. Named after the artist who painted an enduring vision of this place on the soul of a planet, the 320-guest Gauguin sails from Tahiti to the spectacular islands of Rangiroa, Raiatea, Bora Bora, and Moorea. ❧ *On each of her year-round, seven-night cruises, the ship features all ocean view staterooms (50% with private balconies), one of the world's highest space-to-guest ratios, superb cuisine inspired by 2-star Michelin French chef Jean-Pierre Vigato, a spa by legendary Carita of Paris, a state-of-the-art watersports platform and much more.* ❧ *Launched in the six-star tradition of Radisson Seven Seas Cruises, the m/s Paul Gauguin, like the other ships in the fleet — the ssc Radisson Diamond, the m/s Song of Flower, the m/s Hanseatic and the m/s Bremen — takes you to destinations beyond imagination. In a style, that is itself, a dream.*

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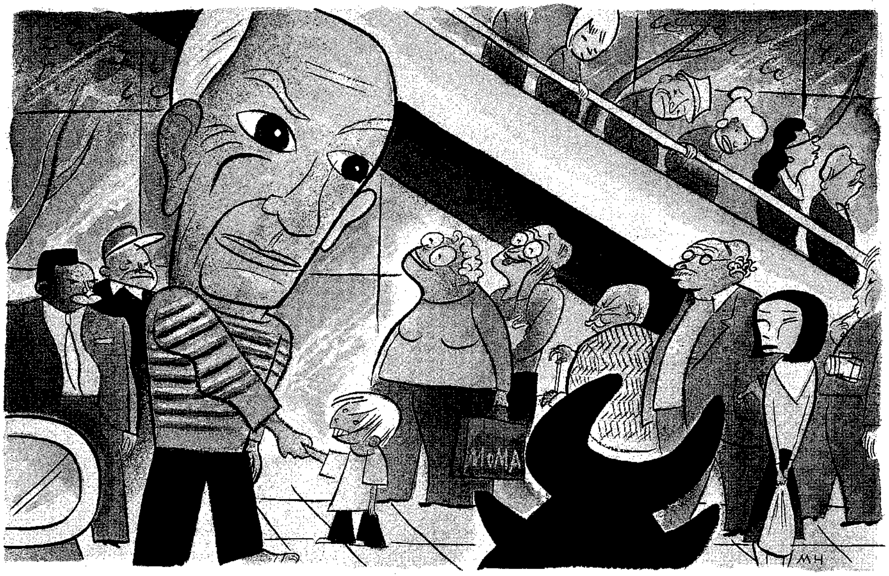
épater le bourgeois anymore. This does. Through Nov. 14. (Team, 527 W. 26th St. 279-9219.)

Jennifer Reeves—Jokey, good-natured paintings by a young artist whose début generated a good deal of art-world buzz last year. Using paint as thick and bright as Play-Doh, Reeves conjures up infantile landscapes. There are rain clouds of succulent blue glop, scribbled trees, ribbony fields of polychromatic lasagna. Ironic and dopey at once, her images update Dubuffet for the era of Toys "R" Us. Through Nov. 14. (Stux, 529 W. 20th St. 352-1600.)

Scott Richter—Desks and tables piled high with tilting, improbable layers of viscous paint. What could be a one-note idea (a sort of laundry-room Brancusi) instead takes on a dreamy resonance, as if scenes from Philip Guston paintings had materialized. And, in fact, one of these sculptures borrows Guston's palette of black, red, and pink in delicate homage. Through Nov. 14. (Harris, 529 W. 20th St. 463-9666.)



A Disney-esque Picasso shows up at MOMA, courtesy of Maurizio Cattelan.

MARCELLUS HALL

Marnie Weber—"The Tender Desert," photo-collages and video installations, all of which tell, in fragmentary form, the tale of a group of "Unlovables"—female prisoners banished to a wasteland of rodents and other vermin. That all of these "unlovables" have been collaged from the pages of porn magazines leads one to wonder: unlovable by whom? Weber's sense of irony seems a tad heavy-handed, but there is definitely a droll Surrealist wit in the images of naked torsos sprouting from the heads of flowering cacti. Maybe the desert isn't so bleak after all. Through Nov. 21. (Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555.)

Sue Williams—Large canvases of loopy calligraphic lines on otherwise empty fields. In her last show, Williams's linear snarls depicted vast daisy chains of sexual mayhem. Here, her graceful, de Kooning-esque contours have grown more hallucinatory: as your eyes follow the outlines, her fantasy objects seem to shape-shift unexpectedly, pudenda turns into fashion frill, then to water bottle, and so on. Through Nov. 21. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121.)

Short List—**SHONAGH ADELMAN,** Kirkland, 504 W. 22nd St. 627-3930. Through Nov. 28. . . . **HANNO AHRENS,** Foster, 529 W. 20th St. 966-9024. Through Nov. 21. . . . **CARL ANDRE,** Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105. Through Nov. 28. . . . **SHIMON ATTIE,** Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 645-1701. Through Nov. 14. . . . **MICHEL AUDER,** AC Project Room, 453 W. 17th St. 645-4970. Through Nov. 28. . . . **JOHN BAUER,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Through Nov. 28. . . . **NAYLAND BLAKE,** Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Through Nov. 28. . . . **WILLEM DE KOONING,** Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200. Through Dec. 19. . . . **EUGENIO DITTBORN,** Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave., at 18th St. 367-7474. Through Dec. 5. . . . **LUCY GUNNING,** Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Through Nov. 28. . . . **KEVIN HANLEY,** I-20 Gallery, 529 W. 20th St. 645-1100. Through Nov. 28. . . . **RICHARD HELL,** Goldsworthy, 453 W. 17th St. 414-4560. Through Nov. 14. . . . **ROY KORTICK,** Debs, 529 W. 20th St. 647-7080. Through Nov. 14. . . . **IÑIGO MANGLANO-OVALLE,** Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 633-6999. Through Nov. 28. . . . **ANDREW MASULLO,** Eller, 529 W. 20th St. 206-6411. Through Nov. 14. . . . **TONY OURSLER,** Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100. Through Nov. 28. . . . **MONIQUE PRIETO,** Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. 727-7366. Through Dec. 23. . . . **JAMES ROSENQUIST,** Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500. Through Nov. 28. . . . **GEORGE STOLL,** Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753. Through Nov. 28.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Ann Craven—Giant canvases of little songbirds—a finch, a pair of dwarf parrots, a quizzical tanager. At this monumental size, Craven's fulsome paint handling looks delicate—feathery, in fact. The size also highlights the sombre, psychological side of formal portraits: the birdies seem to have a lot on their pretty bird brains, as if they were university presidents. Through Nov. 14. (Marcus, 578 Broadway. 226-3200.)

Leon Golub—Four large, characteristically grim paintings on unstretched linen from the painter laureate of the Bosnia/Rwanda/Kosovo decade. A dismembered body, a mercenary raising his weapon to the sky in triumph, a dog lifting his leg over a grinning skull—Golub delivers these and other nightmares with the curt pessimism of a U.N. official announcing a new round of sanctions. Through Nov. 14. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232.)

H. C. Westermann (1922-81)—A suite of woodcuts from 1975 called "The Connecticut Ballroom," along with sculptures and related studies. On the basis of his cartoony, disaster-laden imagery (shipwrecks, kamikaze planes, volcanoes, and rampant alligators), you might conclude that this early outsider artist was certifiably paranoid. But the opposite appears to be true: Westermann, who served as a battleship gunner in the Second World War and then reënlisted for the Korean War, simply loved disaster. Through Nov. 7. (Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. 941-0012.)

Short List—**FRANCIS BACON,** Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. 274-9300. Through Jan. 16. . . . **WILLEM DE KOONING,** The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166. Through Dec. 19. . . . **DANIELLA DOOLING,** Kustera, 41 Wooster St. 965-1527. Through Nov. 28. . . . **NICHOLAS KAHN AND RICHARD SELESNICK,** Knowlton, 568 Broadway. 966-2625. Through Jan. 9. . . . **JANNIS KOUNELLIS,** Ace, 275 Hudson St. 255-5599. Through Nov. 28. . . . **RICHARD PHILLIPS,** Petzel, 26 Wooster St. 334-9466. Through Nov. 28. . . . **MATTHEW RITCHIE,** Basilico, 26 Wooster St. 966-1831. Through Nov. 28. . . . **JOEL SHAPIRO,** Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. 431-9224. Through Nov. 14. (See listing in Galleries—Uptown.) . . . **ANDY WARHOL,** Kasmin, 74 Grand St. 219-3219. Through Nov. 14. . . . **HOLLY ZAUSNER,** Golden, 39 Wooster St. 274-0080. Through Nov. 28.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Sotheby's—Nov. 5: Continental furniture and decorative art. . . . ¶ Nov. 9-10: European paintings, drawings, and sculptures from the nineteenth-century and Belle Époque, including an unusual collection of paintings inspired by Shakespearean subjects. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

Christie's East—Auctions of moderately priced works of twentieth-century American design (Nov. 10) and of jewelry and books (Nov. 11). (219 E. 67th St. 606-0400.)

Doyle—Nov. 9: Sales of books, autographs, and photographs, as well as Old Master, modern, and contemporary prints . . . . ¶ Nov. 10: Haute couture and textiles. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)

R. M. Smythe—An auction of autographs includes a blank personal check signed by John F. Kennedy just before his fateful trip to Dallas in 1963; since he did not like to carry cash, he typically equipped his Secret Service agents with such checks to cover unanticipated purchases. (Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. Nov. 10. For information, call 800-622-1880.)

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Swann—Books about science, technology, and medicine. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. Nov. 5.)

Print Fair—For the eighth year, the members of the International Fine Print Dealers Association invite New Yorkers to come up to see their etchings. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Nov. 4-8. For information, call 777-5218.)

Triple Pier Expo—The first of this rambling show's two weekends. (Piers 88, 90, and 92, Twelfth Ave., from 48th St. to 52nd St. Nov. 7-8. For information, call 255-0020. The show continues Nov. 14-15.)

Poster Auctions International—An auction of six hundred vintage posters, including an especially notable collection of posters created in Berlin during the Weimar Republic. (Diocese of the Armenian Church, 630 Second Ave., at 34th St. Nov. 8. For information, call 787-4000.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

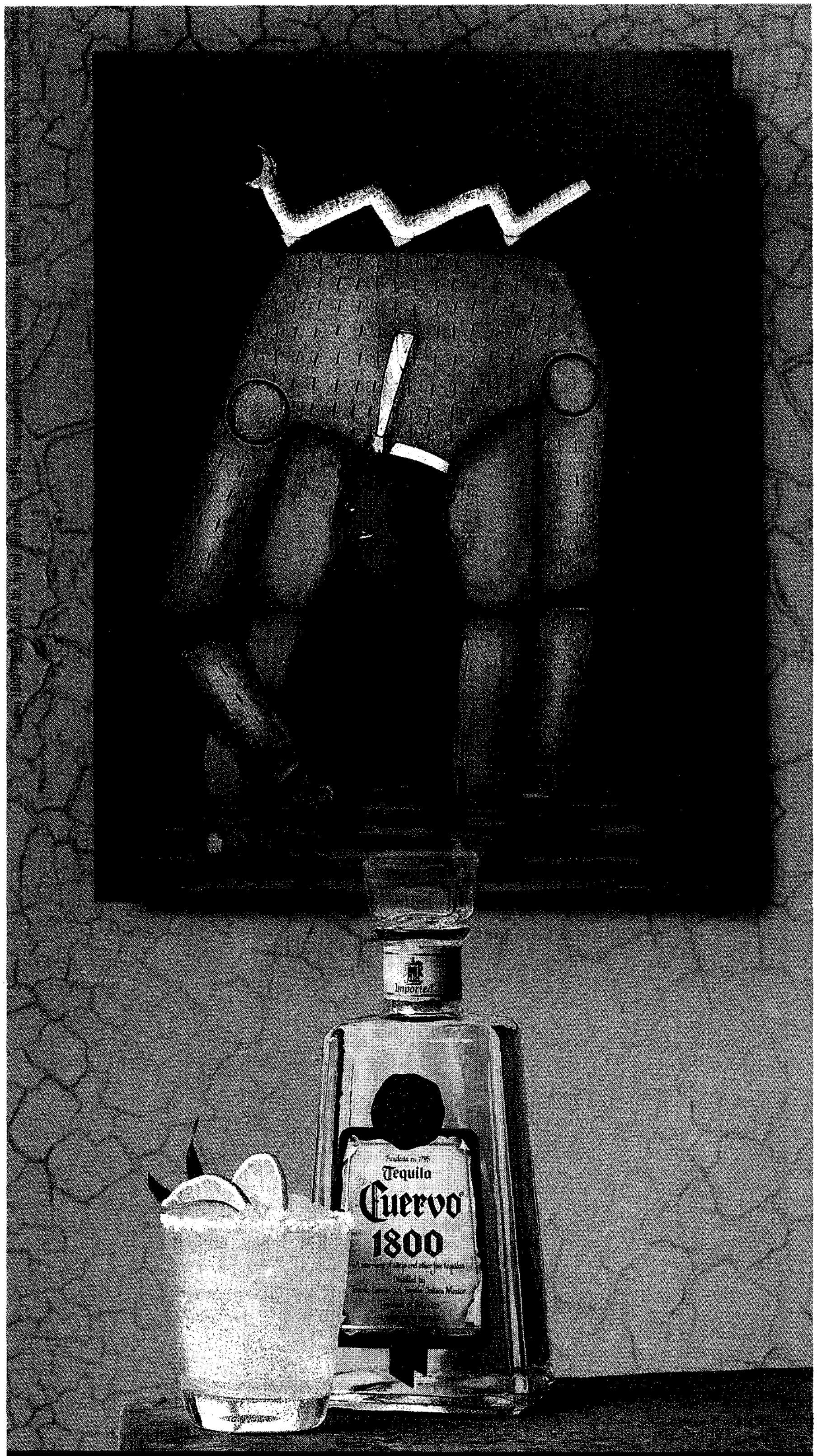
Julius Shulman—Wonderfully crisp modernist interiors and exteriors, in black-and-white and color, by this octogenarian chronicler of the Southern California architecture of Richard Neutra, Charles Eames, Raphael Soriano, Frank Lloyd Wright, and others. Through Nov. 14. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.)

International Center of Photography—"Walker Evans, Simple Secrets," a show of works from the collection of Marian and Benjamin A. Hill. . . . ¶ "Intimate City: The Photographs of Thomas Roma." Both shows through Nov. 29. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 8; and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

International Center of Photography Midtown—"Seeing Is Believing," a survey of the work of Vik Muniz. Through Nov. 8. (Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 8; and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

Short List—**ANSEL ADAMS**, Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223. Through Dec. 5. . . . **JAYNE HINDS BIDAUT**, Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819. Through Nov. 14. . . . **BRASSAÏ**, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through Nov. 14. . . . **LOUIS BRAWLEY**, Deven Golden, 16 Mercer St. 334-3124. Through Nov. 14. . . . **JIM DINE**, Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Through Nov. 28. . . . **LEE FRIEDLANDER**, Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through Dec. 31. . . . **NAN GOLDIN**, Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Through Nov. 28. . . . **KIM IACONO**, Arsenal gallery, Fifth Ave. at 64th St. 360-8163. Open weekdays, 9 to 5; through Dec. 10. . . . **BILL JACOBSON**, Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Through Nov. 28. . . . **JAN LUKAS**, De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. 327-1482. Through Nov. 7. . . . **KATHRYN MARX**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Through Nov. 7. . . . **ABELARDO MORELL**, Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766. Through Dec. 5. . . . **ROGER NEWTON**, Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through Nov. 14. . . . **NORMAN PARKINSON** and **DOMINIQUE NABOKOV**, Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. 966-6223. Both shows through Dec. 5. . . . **CHRIS RAINER**, SABA, 116 E. 16th St. 477-7722. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays; through Nov. 30. . . . **GRACE ROBERTSON**, Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon; through Dec. 5. . . . **JOHN SCHABEL**, Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. 727-2752. Through Dec. 5. . . . **HIROSHI SUGIMOTO**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. 966-6160. Through Nov. 13. . . . **WOLFGANG TILLMANS**, Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. 627-6000. Through Nov. 28. . . . **BEN VAUTIER**, Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223. Through Dec. 5. . . . **BRETT WESTON**, Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070. Through Nov. 7.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art.)



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CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 501-3330.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**TOSCA,** with Maria Guleghina, Richard Leech, and Juan Pons; conducted by Nello Santi. (Nov. 4 at 8 and Nov. 7 at 1:30.) . . . **CARMEN,** with Hei-Kyung Hong, Béatrice Uria-Monzon, Franco Farina, and Gregg Baker; David Robertson. (Nov. 5 at 8.) . . . **AIDA,** with Sharon Sweet, Dolora Zajick, Fabio Armiliato, and Juan Pons; Mr. Santi. (Nov. 6 and Nov. 10 at 7:30.) . . . **LE NOZZE DI FIGARO,** with Renée Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli (as Susanna), Susanne Mentzer, Bryn Terfel (as Figaro), and Dwayne Croft; James Levine. (Nov. 7 at 8.) . . . **LA BOHÈME,** with Hei-Kyung Hong, Gwynne Geyer, Frank Lopardo, and Gino Quilico; Marco Armiliato. (Nov. 9 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—Nov. 5 at 7:30 and Nov. 7 at 1:30: "The Cunning Little Vixen," by Janáček. . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 8 and Nov. 8 at 1:30: "Rigoletto." . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 8: "Of Mice and Men," by Carlisle Floyd. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting a double bill of Mascagni's "L'Amico Fritz" and Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Nov. 7 at 7:30 and Nov. 8 at 2:30.)

"Acis and Galatea"—Handel's charming pastoral, performed in concert by the Four Nations Ensemble and Ann Monoyios (soprano), Mary Ann Hart (mezzo-soprano), Nils Brown (tenor), and Peter Becker (baritone). (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 9 at 7:30.)

Opera Nova—The company, which in recent productions transformed the soldiers of Donizetti's "Daughter of the Regiment" into a squadron of meter maids and had an acquisitive Upper East Sider lure Hansel and Gretel with the promise of Rollerblades, turns its attention to Massenet's "Cinderella," which tells the tale of a Kansas farm girl who encounters aliens on the way to the big dance, where she will meet Vince Charming, football hero. But you knew that. (Sanford Meisner Theatre, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 23rd St. Nov. 10 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 724-8204. Through Nov. 15.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Leonard Slatkin conducting. Nov. 5 and Nov. 7 at 8, Nov. 6 at 11 A.M., and Nov. 10 at 7:30: An all-American program comprising Bernstein's "On the Waterfront" concert suite, MacDowell's Piano Concerto No. 2 (featuring André Watts), Benjamin Lees's Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra (spotlighting four of the orchestra's principal players—violinists Glenn Dicterow and Marc Ginsberg, violist Cynthia Phelps, and cellist Carter Brey), and Peter Schickele's Symphony No. 1. . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 2: Music by Schickele, in a Young People's Concert.

Juilliard Orchestra—David Robertson, five years into his tenure as the music director of the Ensemble Intercontemporaine, of Paris, leads Debussy's "Jeux," Ligeti's "Atmosphères," and Messiaen's "Turangalîla-symphonie." (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

Boston Symphony—Seiji Ozawa conducts Bartók's "The Miraculous Mandarin" Suite and Mahler's "Das Lied von der Erde" (featuring soprano Jessye Norman and tenor Ben Heppner). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 4-5 at 8.)

Voices of Ascension Chorus and Orchestra—Dennis Keene directs Duruflé's Requiem and Kodály's Missa Brevis. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. Nov. 6 at 8.)

PASCAL LEMAITRE

Kirov Orchestra—The St. Petersburg-based ensemble, conducted by Valery Gergiev, performs three all-Tchaikovsky programs at Carnegie Hall. Nov. 6 at 8: The symphonic ballad "Voyevoda," the rarely played Piano Concerto No. 3 (with Alexander Toradze), and the Symphony No. 6. . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 8: The complete score for "The Nutcracker." . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 2: Tchaikovsky's opera "Iolanta," in a concert version, with the Kirov Opera Chorus and soloists from the company's roster.

Richard Tucker Gala—The annual extravaganza for voice lovers, this year featuring performances by sopranos Patricia Racette, Ruth Ann Swenson, Maria Guleghina, and Maureen O'Flynn; mezzo-sopranos Dolora Zajick and Béatrice Uria-Monzon; tenors Fabio Armiliato and Richard Leech; baritones Juan Pons and Dwayne Croft; bass-baritone Bryn Terfel; the New York Choral Society; and members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 8 at 6.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard leads Cadman's "American Suite" and two works featuring pianist Sara Davis Buechner: Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 1 and Busoni's arrangement of Bach's D-Minor Keyboard Concerto. (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. Nov. 9 at 2 and 7 and Nov. 10 at 8. For information about tickets, call 799-1259.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—David Zinman conducts two works each by Christopher Rouse and Leonard Bernstein—the former's "Iscariot" and "Der Gerettete Alberich," a fantasy for percussion and orchestra (here featuring Evelyn Glennie), and the latter's "On the Waterfront" symphonic suite (being concurrently performed seven blocks uptown by New York's home-town band—what are the chances?) and his ballet "Fancy Free." (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 10 at 8.)

RECITALS

Music at the Morgan—A string ensemble presents chamber works by Tchaikovsky (his "Souvenir de Florence"), Arensky, and Shostakovich. (Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St. 685-0008, ext. 347. Nov. 4 at 6:15.)

"Die Winterreise"—Schubert's cycle of two dozen heartrending songs, written in 1827, the year he died, might be seen as illustrating twenty-four gradations of despondency. It was conceived as a concert work, of course, but, given the pictorial and emotional richness the songs evoke, it's no surprise that performers might be tempted to place them in a more theatrical setting. That's precisely what baritone James Maddalena and pianist Robert Spano will do in this production, which unfurls within a site-specific installation by the French conceptual artist Christian Boltanski. (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St. 718-636-4100. Nov. 4-5 and Nov. 7 at 7:30 and Nov. 8 at 3.)

Gregory Fulkerson—The violinist performs Bach's three Unaccompanied Partitas. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

Artek—The period-instrument Baroque ensemble performs songs by Purcell and John Blow, motets by Monteverdi, a viola-da-gamba suite by Couperin, a lute suite by Silvius Leopold Weiss, and harpsichord sonatas by Scarlatti. (Church of the Resurrection, 119 E. 74th St. Nov. 4 at 8. For information about tickets, call 873-0473.)

Jan Vogler and Andrea Lucchesini—The cellist and the pianist offer all five of Beethoven's cello sonatas—which makes for a very full evening. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Presenting Mozart's B-Flat-Major String Quartet (K. 589), Dvořák's Terzetto for Two Violins and Viola, and Tchaikovsky's String Quartet in D Major. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. Nov. 5 at 7:30 and Nov. 8 at 4.)

New York Philomusica—An all-Bach concert, comprising the C-Major Trio Sonata (BWV 1037), D-Minor Violin Concerto, G-Minor Sonata for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord, and Fifth "Brandenburg" Concerto. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 5 at 8.)

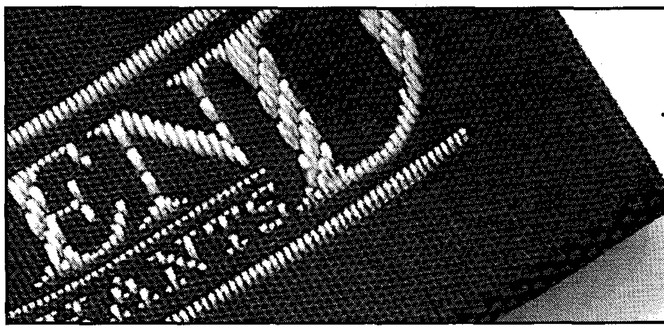
Randall Scarlata—In his New York début recital, the baritone performs songs by Schumann, Schubert, Sibelius, Poulenc (the cycle "La Fraîcheur et le Feu"), Hahn, and Lee Hoiby; with pianist Cameron Stowe. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 5 at 8.)

Ruth Laredo—The pianist discusses and performs solo and chamber works by Mozart, assisted by the Shanghai String Quartet and double-bassist John T. Kulowitsch. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 6 at 7.)

Hugo Wolf String Quartet—The Vienna-based foursome plays quartets by Haydn (in B-Flat Major, Op. 76, No. 4), Ligeti (his Second), and Brahms (in C Minor). (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Nov. 6 at 8.)

Lions Gate Trio—Performing piano trios by Eric Moe, Augusta Read Thomas, Chausson, and Schumann. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Nov. 6 at 8.)

Lucine Amara—Yes, *that* Lucine Amara—the Hartford-born soprano who made her Metropolitan Opera début in 1950, at the age of twenty-three, successfully sued the company for age discrimination when it stopped



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booking her (in the mid-seventies), and who, in this recital of songs and arias, hopes to prove herself the operatic equivalent of the Energizer Bunny. (Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace, 28 E. 20th St. Nov. 7 at 2. No charge beyond museum admission.)

Guarneri Quartet—The ensemble plays string quartets by Haydn (in D Major, Op. 64, No. 5), Dvořák (in E-Flat Major, Op. 51), and Schumann (in A Minor). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 7 at 8.)

Barbara Irvine—The pianist launches her performance project "The Other Side of Broadway," which is dedicated to championing concert music by composers better known for their theatre scores. This installment includes David Shire's "Sonata for Cocktail Piano," Charles Strouse's "Three American Pieces," and Harvey Schmidt's "Monteargentario," as well as movements from Jay Alan Zimmerman's "The Spice Rack" and the "Seven Anniversaries" by Bernstein (whose reputation remains balanced between the theatre and concert worlds). (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Nov. 8 at 2. For information about tickets, call 564-6519.)

An die Musik—The chamber ensemble performs works by Haydn, Mozart (his string arrangement of four Bach fugues, with original preludes attached), and Schumann (his Piano Quartet), as well as the première of Bruce Adolphe's "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," in which the popular psychologist Ruth Westheimer delivers a narration. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 8 at 4.)

Fretwork—Countertenor Michael Chance assists the consort of four viols in music by Byrd, Purcell, and other early English composers, as well as recent compositions by Ivan Moody and Tan Dun. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. Nov. 8 at 5.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Violinist and violist Ida Kavafian assists members of Chamber Music Society Two (the Society's program for spotlighting up-and-coming chamber-music talent) in Mozart's Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major, Arensky's String Quartet No. 2 (for the unorthodox combination of violin, viola, and two cellos), and Mendelssohn's Piano Trio in C Minor. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 8 at 5.)

"Slam Dunk"—A concert in which the entire percussion faculty of the Manhattan School of Music lets loose; including works by Elliott Carter, Chinary Ung, and Brian Ferneyhough. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Nov. 8 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Sonic Boom Festival—This year's avant-garde celebration concludes with a screening of F. W. Murnau's silent-film classic "The Last Laugh" (originally titled "Der Letzte Mann"), with a new soundtrack score by Dean Drummond performed live by Newband (the curators of the Harry Partch instrumentarium). (Winter Garden, World Financial Center. Nov. 9 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

Milton Babbitt—An evening of conversation with this eminent master and performances of several of his works (along with some pieces by Brahms and Mel Powell), with violinist Curtis Macomber and pianist Robert Taub among the performers. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 9 at 8.)

Vienna Piano Trio—Performing trios by Haydn, Beethoven (the "Archduke"), and Schnittke. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 10 at 8.)

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio—This group, now in its twenty-first year, is spending the season delving into the complete piano trios of Beethoven and the chamber music of Shostakovich, two masters whose music often strikes listeners as linked in spirit. In this installment, the trio offers Beethoven's Trios in C Minor (Op. 1, No. 3) and in D Major (Op. 70, No. 1, the "Ghost"), his Variations in E-Flat Major (Op. 44), and Shostakovich's Cello Sonata. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Nov. 10-11 at 8.)

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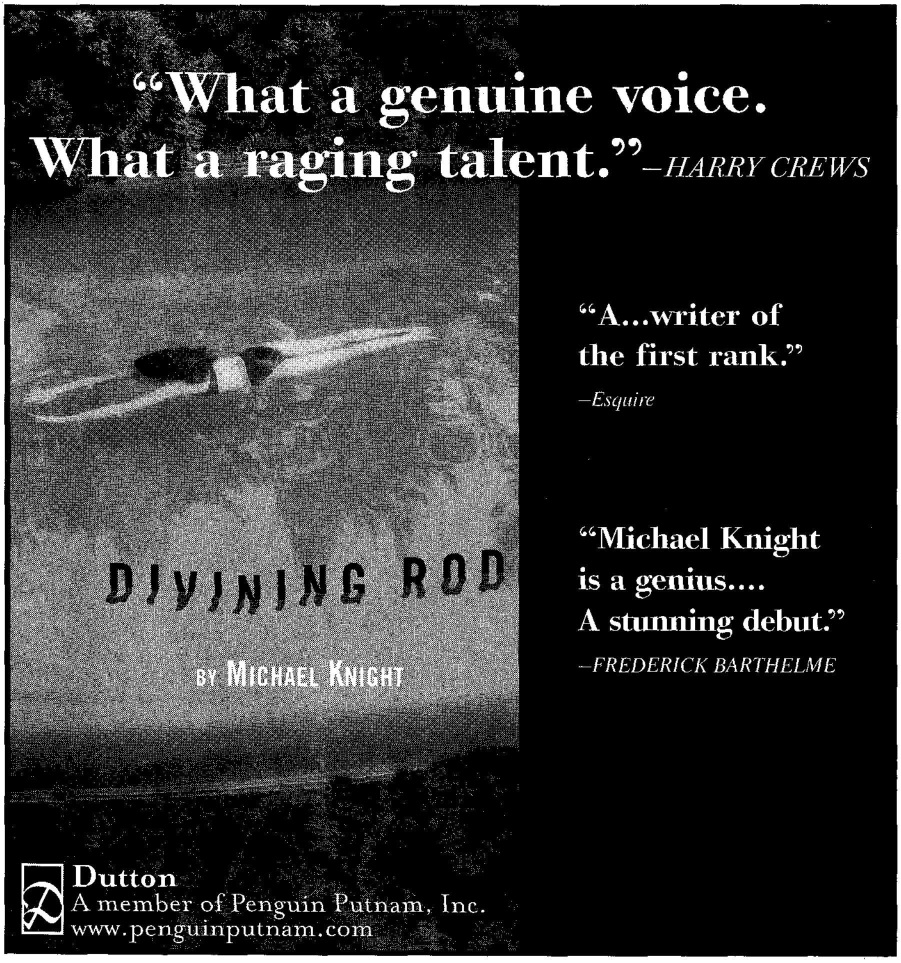

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ALSO OF INTEREST

MARIA LUCIA COSTA: A recital of piano music from Fascist Italy, by Ennio Porrino, Riccardo Pick-Mangiagalli, and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. (Casa Italiana, Columbia University, Amsterdam Ave. between 116th and 118th Sts. Nov. 5 at 6. No tickets necessary.) . . . **BACHMANN-KLIBONOFF-FRIDMAN TRIO:** Folkloric chamber works by Dvořák, Bartók, Rózsa, and others; with clarinettist David Krakauer. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. Nov. 7 at 7. For information about tickets, call 475-5871) . . . **INTERFAITH CONCERT OF REMEMBRANCE:** The annual Holocaust commemoration, with the Brooklyn Philharmonic. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 122nd St. Nov. 7 at 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . **TRIO DI PARMA:** Piano trios by Brahms (in C Major) and Beethoven (the "Ghost"). (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. Nov. 8 at 11 A.M. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.) . . . **"SUNDAYS ON THE ISLAND":** Chamber music by Mendelssohn and Brahms. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. Nov. 8 at noon.) . . . **CANTERBURY CHORAL SOCIETY:** Orchestral and choral works by Schütz, Widor, and many others. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Nov. 8 at 4. Admission by contribution.) . . . **KRISTINA COOPER:** Cellist, with pianist Ilan Rechtman, in music by Brahms and others. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Nov. 8 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary. . . . ¶ Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. Nov. 9 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

HOT TO TROT—More than two hundred and fifty of the world's top riders bring their crops and boots and courage to town for the hundred-and-fifteenth National Horse Show. At stake is some two hundred thousand dollars in prize money. But that's not all. In addition to the usual jumping, gaiting, and sidesaddle competitions, there will be dressage and vaulting exhibitions, trick-roping displays, and a demonstration by the New York City Mounted Police. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6741. Nov. 5-8.)

READINGS—Nov. 9 at 7:30: By poets Vincent Katz and Claudia Rankine. (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 8: By Kathryn Walker, Frances Sternhagen, and other actors, from Joel Agee's new translation of Heinrich von Kleist's verse drama "Penthesilea." Maurice Sendak, who illustrated Agee's edition, provides the backdrops. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

TALKS—Nov. 4 at 7:30: Ornithologist Tom Damiani gives tips on identifying birds by their calls. (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Cross Bay Boulevard, Broad Channel, Queens. For reservations, which are required, call 718-318-4340.) . . . ¶ Nov. 7, starting at 10: In conjunction with an exhibition of more than a hundred and twenty prints and drawings by William Hogarth, a host of art historians and academics, including David Rosand and Allen Staley, present a daylong symposium on Hogarth's life and times. (Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. For more information, call 854-2877.) . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 6: Translator Joel Agee and illustrator Maurice Sendak discuss their new edition of Heinrich von Kleist's verse drama "Penthesilea." Playwright Tony Kushner is the moderator. (See Readings.) (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 6:30: Writer David Kertzer ("The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara") and historian Alexander Stille discuss the relationships between the Papacy and the Jews. (Jewish Community Center, 15 W. 65th St. No tickets necessary.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Baked Apple

EATING out in New York isn't just about the food on your plate, it's also about who's sitting at the next table and who's calling the shots in the kitchen. A stylish new history of the city's favorite pastime, **ON THE TOWN IN NEW YORK** (Routledge), puts the myth before the menu. Its authors, Michael and Ariane Batterberry, lard their assured, breezy, three-century narrative with rich vignettes of famous feasters, from Washington Irving to Salvador Dali. More intimate—and current—views of the city's culinary fashions can be found in a batch of new cookbooks, taken from some of New York's most celebrated eateries.

ALFRED PORTALE'S GOTHAM BAR AND GRILL COOKBOOK (Doubleday) offers classic American fare, considerably dressed up, such as striped bass with sweet-corn custard and champagne vinaigrette and apple-Calvados tarts with maple ice cream and cranberry confit. From Rao's, the tiny, old-friends-only Italian place in East Harlem, comes **RAO'S COOKBOOK: OVER 100 YEARS OF ITALIAN HOME COOKING** (Random House), which divulges the secrets of Aunt Anna's ultra-soothing escarole-and-white-bean soup and veal Milanese. Chef-about-town Jean-Georges Vongerichten has pulled a new book out of his apron, **JEAN-GEORGES: COOKING AT HOME WITH A FOUR-STAR CHEF** (Broadway), and its recipes are surprisingly accessible. Even timid chefs should have no trouble pulling off Vongerichten's steak with red-wine reduction and carrot puree, or his gently cooked salmon with mashed potatoes.

Junior's, the immense, unpretentious Brooklyn landmark on Flatbush Avenue, which has enjoyed capacity post-church crowds for decades, will publish **WELCOME TO JUNIOR'S** in February (Morrow), with recipes for its crispy Southern-fried chicken and luscious fresh-strawberry cheesecake. The no-nonsense virtues of its great rival for family dining, out in Sheepshead Bay, are extolled in **LUNDY'S: REMINISCENCES AND RECIPES FROM BROOKLYN'S LEGENDARY RESTAURANT** (HarperCollins). Recipes range from roasted whole fish with fennel and shallots to flaky blueberry pie. With these books you can make it all at home, but remember: the ambiance is not included.

DOUG ALLEN

Books.

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> "I have come to know that God can dream a bigger dream for you (for me) than you can dream for yourself, and that the whole role for your life on Earth is to attach yourself to that force which is divine and let yourself be released to that. I felt the same way about making a movie of *Beloved*. Somehow I felt it was divine—I don't know what other word to use."
>
> – excerpt from *Journey to Beloved*

JOURNEY TO BELOVED

by Oprah Winfrey
with photographs by Ken Regan

On the set of the movie *Beloved*, Oprah Winfrey kept a unique journal. She reflected upon how playing the part of Sethe—a former slave coming to terms with a haunting past—changed her, a transformation far more profound than she had anticipated. Her insights into Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, and into Jonathan Demme's film adaptation, are consistently insightful and intelligent. Oprah's heartfelt words, together with Ken Regan's exquisite photographs, make *Journey to Beloved* a beautiful keepsake. (Hyperion)

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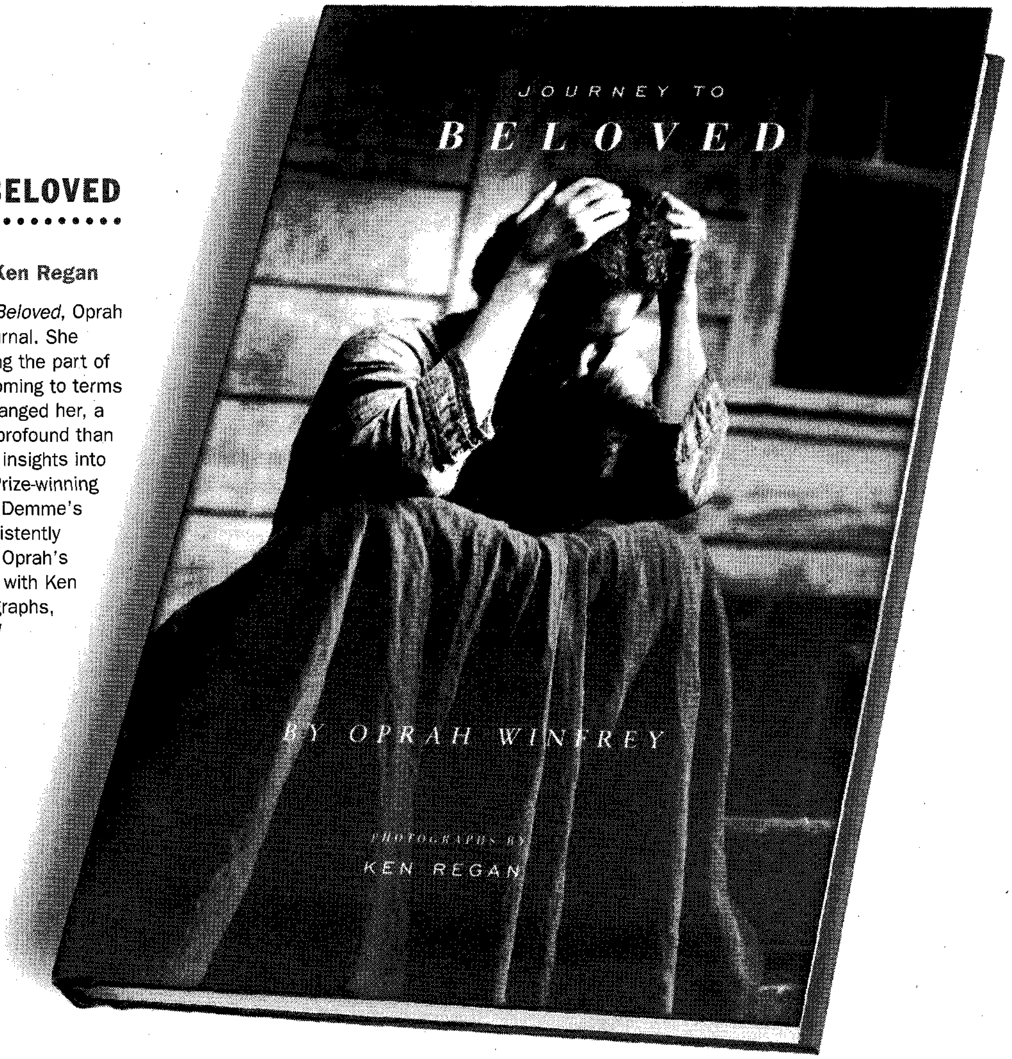

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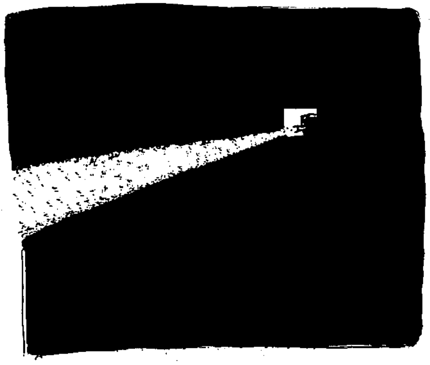


THE MOVIES

OPENING

Elizabeth—A biographical film about Queen Elizabeth I of England as she begins her reign. With Cate Blanchett, Geoffrey Rush, Joseph Fiennes, and Christopher Eccleston; directed by Shekhar Kapur. Opening Nov. 6. (Lincoln Square, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, and Village Theatre VII.)

Gods and Monsters—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Nov. 4. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

A Place Called Chiapas—Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Nov. 4.

The Siege—A thriller about terrorists in New York City, with Denzel Washington, Annette Bening, and Bruce Willis. Directed by Edward Zwick. Opening Nov. 6.

Velvet Goldmine—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Nov. 6. (Chelsea Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Waterboy—A comedy about a college-football water carrier who discovers he has a knack for tackling. With Adam Sandler, Kathy Bates, and Henry Winkler; directed by Frank Coraci. Opening Nov. 6.

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

American History X—Young Edward Norton, who seemed to have no body at all in the recent "Rounders"—he faded away from the camera, like a ghost—is here muscled up and swaggering, with a swastika the size of a giant tarantula emblazoned on his chest. He plays a skinhead neo-Nazi in Venice Beach, California, and screenwriter David McKenna has composed some shrewd tirades for him that push only slightly past standard white working-class resentment. Norton gives the young thug an ambiguous erotic allure; he's almost appealing. Everything else in this melodrama, directed and photographed by the British commercial director Tony Kaye, is to be regretted—the alternation between color (the present) and black-and-white (the past); the mopey performance by Edward Furlong as Norton's kid brother, who is haplessly turning into a skinhead himself; and the confused political implications of the story, especially the violent ending, which entirely reverses the direction in which the material has been going. Kaye's work is self-important and garish. The movie was taken away from him during the editing phase. It should have been.—*David Denby* (Angelika Film Center, Cinema II, and Lincoln Square.)

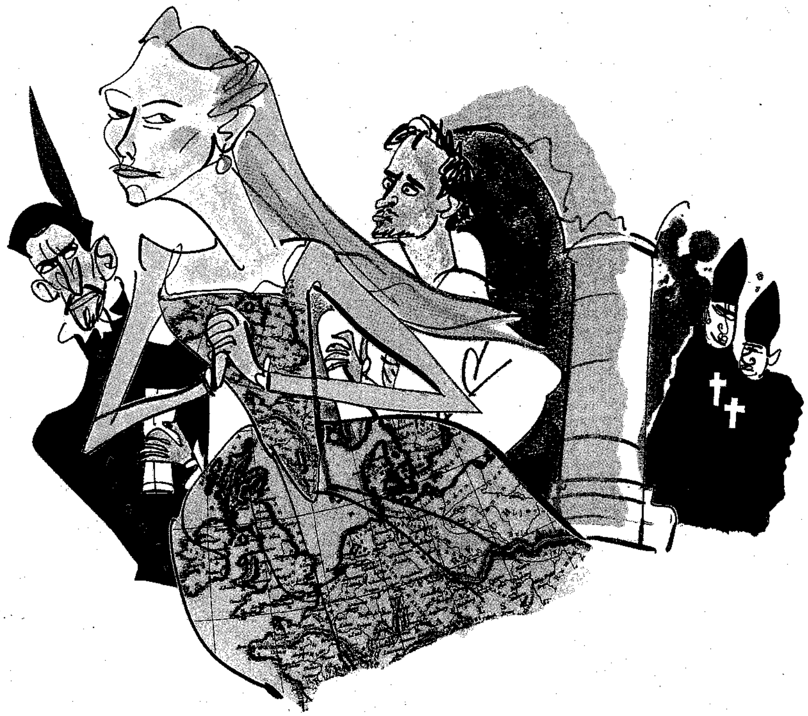
Antz—The latest showpiece for computer animation, with all the contoured, suspiciously gleaming perfection that this entails. In this case, most of the characters are ants—a curious choice, since they all tend to look roughly the same, and it takes a while to sort out the heroes from the villains. Fortunately, help is at hand from the absurdly starry cast of voices; the leading ant, Z, is played by Woody Allen, and his new royal girlfriend by Sharon Stone. (In your dreams, Woody.) Gene Hackman speaks the role of a murderous general, with Christopher Walken as his sidekick; best of all is Sylvester Stallone, cast *completely* against type as a dim but helpful hunk of brawn. The plot is a swift, if confusing, account of Z's ascent to a station above that of his millions of fellow-workers; the directors—Eric Darnell and Tim Johnson—seem slightly unsure about what they think of old-fashioned working-class solidarity. With Anne Bancroft, Danny Glover, Jennifer Lopez, and—as a couple of Wasp wasps—Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin.—*Anthony Lane* (10/19/98) (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Apt Pupil—Overwrought and unpleasant nonsense about a spoiled suburban teen-ager (Brad Renfro) who blackmails an alcoholic old Nazi (Ian McKellen) into telling him stories of the atrocities he committed in a concentration camp. The boy is quickly drawn into the mental orbit of the vicious old man, and the two of them take turns playing nasty tricks on one another. It's meant to be a parable about fascination—the dangers of looking into the abyss, the hidden Nazi in all of us, and so on—but the material feels tired, gimmicky, and sour. Renfro curls his mouth downward and gives us no reason to care about him; the great McKellen, bearded and speaking in a catarrhal rasp, is actually the more sympathetic of the two. Director Bryan Singer ruins a great moment of sheer camp—McKellen, in a Nazi uniform, stomping and saluting as he remembers the good old days—by a lamentable overuse of montage. From a novella by Stephen King, adapted by Brandon Boyce.—*D.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

Beloved—One of the more high-minded and painful follies of recent years. Toni Morrison's celebrated 1987 novel "Beloved"—difficult, allusive, and filled with ghosts—is probably unadaptable, but Oprah Winfrey, with director Jonathan Demme in tow, went ahead with the project after eleven years of discouragement. Oprah plays Sethe, the former slave who, in 1873, lives in an Ohio farmhouse with her teen-age daughter, Denver (Kimberly Elise), her old friend and new lover Paul D (Danny Glover), and the ghost of the daughter she killed long ago when the girl was about to be retaken into slavery. The ghost, at first an unseen presence, smashes crockery to the floor, then appears as a beautiful young woman (Thandie Newton) who growls and talks very, very slowly. The movie would seem to be completely misconceived: rather than dramatizing the moral condition of people burdened by an unspeakable past, it dramatizes the domestic problems of living with a spirit-demon. For most of the hundred and seventy-four minutes we are stuck inside that farmhouse, and when the filmmakers do cut back to complicated events occurring earlier (during the slave years) we can't always tell what's going on. But there are moments of weirdly poetic natural beauty and also some wonderful actresses—Kessia Kordelle as a half-mad runaway white girl who helps deliver Sethe's baby in the woods, and Beah Richards, who shakes and shouts as the elderly preacher Baby Suggs and momentarily brings the show to life.—*D.D.* (10/26 & 11/2/98) (Chelsea West, Cinema II, Guild, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Celebration—Filmed with natural light and sound and urgently searching handheld cameras, Thomas Vinterberg's black comedy buzzes with enough energy to make you think he has set about reinventing cinema. The problem is the film's story—it's shot through with mold. Three siblings (Ulrich Thomsen, Thomas Bo Larsen, and Paprika Steen) return to the Danish countryside to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of their powerful father (Henning Moritzen); smack in the middle of the big party, they erupt with anger at his past abuse. Vinterberg's jittery technique aims for authenticity in the moment, and he does coax delicious performances from his actors, but take away the style and this film is monotonous and shallow. In Danish.—*Sarah Kerr* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

The Cruise—Timothy Levitch, a New York City tour-bus guide, is profiled in this documentary that is basically a seventy-six-minute rant about what Levitch sees and what he thinks of his life in the city. Director Bennett Miller films him as a tourist would with a video camera—that is to say, poorly—but Levitch's rich use of poetic language and imagery provides a strong counterpart. If Levitch seems a little unhinged at times—there's a desperation and ugliness to some of his musings that is disturbing to watch—he's still a fascinating, delusional raconteur. His



Christopher Eccleston, Cate Blanchett, and Joseph Fiennes in "Elizabeth."

M. H. JEEVES

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travelogue is never glib, and often very funny.—*Bruce Diones* (Angelika Film Center.)

Happiness—The new film from Todd Solondz, who found fame with "Welcome to the Dollhouse." This time he broadens his range, moving from one unhappy youngster to three generations of frustrated moaners. The Jordans (Ben Gazzara and Louise Lasser) are ending their frayed marriage, while their daughters (Jane Adams, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Cynthia Stevenson) look wearily for love, and their respectable son-in-law (Dylan Baker) dreams of slaughter and plans his molestation of underage boys. Just an ordinary day in New Jersey, as far as Solondz is concerned, but his obsession with sexual aberration somehow flattens his roster of characters into uniformity; when the large, kindly Kristina (Camryn Manheim) turns out to have dismembered her doorman and frozen his body parts, you can hardly be bothered to take offense. There are plenty of coolly delivered shocks here, but they seem to be muffled by the prevailing glumness: welcome to the doghouse.—*A.L.* (10/19/98) (Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

The Invisible Man (1933)—James Whale, the director of "Frankenstein," made this handsomely tricked-up version of H. G. Wells's fantasy from a well-written adaptation by R. C. Sherriff (and Philip Wylie, though he's not credited); the dialogue is unusually important, since the star (Claude Rains) is disembodied during most of the movie and has to do all his acting with his voice. Rains plays a scientist who experiments with a drug that, while making him invisible, also turns him into a megalomaniac murderer. A little poky but impressively well done.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum 2; Nov. 6-8.)

Living Out Loud—Richard LaGravenese, who has written some popular films for others to direct ("The Fisher King," "The Bridges of Madison County"), now gets behind the camera to film one of his own—a bittersweet comedy about a lonely Upper East Side divorcée (Holly Hunter) and the heavily-in-debt elevator operator (Danny DeVito) who falls in love with her. LaGravenese's script (it was inspired by two Chekhov stories) is filled with small details that allow the two leads to bring out each other's warm, humorous side. There's a gentle tug to the story that sustains it pretty much through to its ridiculously upbeat ending. Queen Latifah co-stars as a classy night-club singer who befriends the couple, and her performance radiates the kind of sexy polish that makes everyone look good.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 72nd Street East, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Mighty—Peter Chelsom's movie is about two boys. One of them, the smart and inventive Kevin (Kieran Culkin), is crippled by a degenerative disease; the other, the slow and wretched Maxwell (Elden Henson), is twice Kevin's size and barely able to look the world in the face. The long and the short of it is that they join forces and make a fine team, winning respect at school and solving the perilous problem of Max's vicious father. Running through their tale is an unlikely Arthurian motif; once Max has hoisted Kevin onto his shoulders, they picture themselves as a single unit—a heroic knight on horseback. Chelsom overdoes their dream, flashing all too often, and too obviously, to shots of real knights in armor; you need the wildness of a Terry Gilliam to make this kind of conceit work. The film threatens to become heavy; what rescues it is the rough and lively performances of the kids, and of Sharon Stone, who makes the most of her supporting role as Kevin's bravely beleaguered mother. With a gonzo cast that includes Gillian Anderson and Meat Loaf.—*A.L.* (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

The Paleface (1922)—Buster Keaton plays a butterfly collector in Indian country who survives a tribal burning with the help of asbestos long johns. Taken for a demigod, he helps his adopted people withstand the encroachments of an oil company. Keaton's own native insouciance transcends politics, correct or incorrect; this swift two-reeler is a hilarious sendup of a tried-and-true colonial fantasy—it could have been called "The Man Who Would Be Chief." Also playing: "The Balloonatic" (1923), an elemental farce about earth, wind, fire, water, sex, and wildlife, with an amazingly Euclidean gag featuring two bears; and "The Blacksmith" (1922), a patchy burlesque of Longfellow's "The Village Blacksmith," with a sprinkling of clever gimmicks (including a shock absorber for horses) and a rousing finish.—*Michael Sragow* (Film Forum 2; Nov. 9.)

Opening Nov. 4, Netty Wild's documentary "A Place Called Chiapas."

CHRISTIAN CLAYTON

A Place Called Chiapas—Netty Wild's earnest but vital documentary about the Zapatista rebellion in southeastern Mexico. Wild could have delved further into the motives of the Zapatistas' witty and media-savvy leader, Subcomandante Marcos, and, especially, into Marcos's relationship with his Indian followers. But her footage of masked rebels, high-handed government negotiators, and the strutting army is valuable nonetheless. She ends up focussing on impoverished Zapatista sympathizers who live north of the rebel zone. The rebels are unable to protect them, the government writes them off, and they are driven from their homes, harassed, and murdered by posses of hungry young reactionaries. It took guts to get this on camera. In English and Spanish.—*S.K.* (Film Forum; starting Nov. 4.)

Pleasantville—A nerdy brother (Tobey Maguire) and a slutty sister (Reese Witherspoon) who live in a dysfunctional single-parent home get beamed into an idyllic fifties TV show and discover that family values weren't so great after all. Gary Ross's fantasy is a much needed plea for the value of art and freethinking. With the help of John Lindley's cinematography—flat, shiny black-and-white to symbolize conformity and voluptuous, 3-D color to symbolize freedom and emotion—it's also a visual stunner. But Ross, who wrote the screenplays for "Dave" and "Big," lacks the imagination to fully develop his own most intriguing ideas. Is the film about then or now, TV or life? It's never quite made clear, and in the end Ross retreats to his old formula—the therapy comedy, in which happiness is just a matter of expressing yourself.—*S.K.* (Coronet Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

Practical Magic—Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman play sisters who are witches but try to live normal lives. One day, in a crisis, they finally cast a spell and immediately get into trouble; Aidan Quinn is the detective/Mr. Right who comes to investigate. Griffin Dunne's plodding adaptation of Alice Hoffman's novel can't decide whether it's a horror show, a cute comedy, or a soap opera. Bullock handles the weepy end as gracefully as anyone could, and Kidman adds spark as the sexually looser of the two sisters. Dianne Wiest and Stockard Channing offer uncharacteristically lifeless support as maiden aunts and mentors in witchcraft.—*S.K.* (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII. . . . ¶ Astor Plaza; through Nov. 5.)

The Saphead (1920)—A curiosity for Keaton fans: this remake of a Douglas Fairbanks stage and screen vehicle gave Keaton his first starring role in a feature. He plays the bumbling inheritor of a Wall Street fortune who gets caught in the emotional and financial manipulations of his bitter brother-in-law. Even in this mild, worm-turning comedy, Keaton is a phenomenal performer. He manages to be just as subliminally expressive in a top hat as he is in his usual porkpie, and he turns the frenzied climax on the trading floor into a vaudevillian tour de force. Herbert Blanché directed.—*M.S.* (Film Forum 2; Nov. 9.)

What Dreams May Come—Robin Williams gives his most cloying performance in this eighty-million-dollar acid-trip fantasy about the pursuit of love in the afterlife. The hyper-romantic script—pure drivel—is by the successful and overrated Ron Bass ("Rain Man," "Waiting to Exhale"), and his story about an accident victim's search for his dead wife's soul reeks of New Age sensitivity training. Though director Vincent Ward used his special-effects budget well—there are some stunning impressionistic moments—the film is as gooey and sticky as an overcooked marshmallow.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia, State, and Village Theatre VII.)

ALSO PLAYING

THE BIG CHILL: Lincoln Square and 64th and 2nd; starting Nov. 6. . . . **BRIDE OF CHUCKY:** Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Park & 86th Street Cinemas. . . . **DESTINY:** Quad Cinema. . . . **THE IMPOSTORS:** Cinema 3rd Avenue, Lincoln Square, and 19th Street East 6. . . . **JOHN CARPENTER'S VAMPIRES:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL:** Angelika Film Center and Paris. . . . **LOVE IS THE DEVIL** (reviewed in our issue of 10/12/98): Quad Cinema. . . . **PECKER:** 19th Street East 6, Regency, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **RONIN** (10/5/98): Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Metro Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **RUSH HOUR:** Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, State, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **SAVING PRIVATE RYAN** (8/3/98): Embassy 1, 59th Street East Cinema, and Waverly. . . . **SLAM:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **SOLDIER:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, East 85th Street, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **TALK OF ANGELS:** Angelika Film Center. . . . **THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY:** Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . **UNMADE BEDS:** The Screening Room. . . . **THE WIZARD OF OZ:** Astor Plaza, Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinema, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII; starting Nov. 6.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

FILM FORUM 2 AND 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**THEATRE 2:** Nov. 4-5: "Dracula" (1931, Tod Browning) and "Dracula's Daughter" (1936, Lambert Hillyer). . . . Nov. 6-8: "The Invisible Man" (†) and "The Mummy" (1932, Karl Freund). . . . From Nov. 10: "The Black Cat" (1934, Edgar G. Ulmer) and "The Wolf Man" (1941, George Waggner). . . . ¶ A program of Buster Keaton films. Nov. 9: "Battling Butler" (1926, Keaton), "The Saphead" (†), and "The Paleface" (†). . . . **THEATRE 3:** "Touch of Evil" (1958, Orson Welles).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of recent films from Germany; all in German, with English subtitles. Nov. 5 at 2:30: "The Wrapped Reichstag" (Jörg Daniel and Wolfram Hissen). . . . Nov. 5 at 6 and Nov. 8 at 2: "Trains 'n' Roses" (Peter Lichtefeld). . . . Nov. 6 at 2:30: "Daybreak" (Oliver Storz). . . . Nov. 6 at 6: "Changing Skins" (Andreas Dresen). . . . Nov. 6 at 8: "Blue Note—A Story of Modern Jazz" (Julian Benedikt). . . . Nov. 7 at 2 and Nov. 9 at 2:30: "The Test" (Janek Rieke). . . . Nov. 7 at 5: "Bertolt Brecht: Love, Revolution, and Other Dangers" (Jutta Brückner). . . . Nov. 8 at 5: "Barluschke" (Thomas Heise). . . . Nov. 9 at 6 and Nov. 10 at 2:30: "Break Even" (Eoin Moore).

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films from Israel; in Hebrew, with English subtitles. Nov. 4 at 2 and 6:15: "Transit" (1980, Dan Wachsmann). . . . Nov. 4 at 4 and 8:15: "Paratroopers" (1977, Yehuda Ne'eman). . . . Nov. 5 at 2 and 6: "The Vulture" (1981, Yaki Yosha). . . . Nov. 5 and Nov. 7 at 4: "Berlin-Jerusalem" (1989, Amos Gitai). . . . Nov. 6 at 2 and 6:15: "Eastern Wind" (1982, Wachsmann). . . . Nov. 6 at 4 and 8:15: "Repeat Dive" (1982, Shimon Dotan). . . . Nov. 7 at 6 and Nov. 8 at 8:30: "Rage and Glory" (1985, Avi Nesher). . . . Nov. 7 at 8:30 and Nov. 8 at 6:15: "Beyond the Walls" (1986, Uri Barbash). . . . Nov. 8 at 4: "Esther" (1985, Gitai). . . . Nov. 9 at 2 and 6:15: "Avanti Popolo" (1986, Rafi Bukaee). . . . Nov. 9 at 4 and 8: "Himmo, King of Jerusalem" (1987, Amos Gutmann). . . . Nov. 10 at 2: "The Smile of the Lamb" (1986, Dotan). . . . Nov. 10 at 4: "Summer of Aviya" (1988, Eli Cohen). . . . ¶ Nov. 7-8 at 2: "The Boots" (1992, Mohammad-Ali Talebi).

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Nov. 7 at 2: "Art for Teachers of Children" (1995, Jennifer Montgomery). . . . Nov. 7 at 4:30: "Wittgenstein" (1993, Derek Jarman). . . . Nov. 8 at 2: "Irma Vep" (1996, Olivier Assayas). . . . Nov. 8 at 4:30: "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" (1964, Jacques Demy; in French).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—A retrospective (through Dec. 22) of films featuring Catherine Deneuve. Nov. 10 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Genealogies of a Crime" (1997, Raúl Ruiz; in French).

SYMPHONY SPACE, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—A program of films made by United Artists. Nov. 10 at 7: "The Miracle Worker" (1962, Arthur Penn). . . . Nov. 10 at 9: "Orphans of the Storm" (1922, D. W. Griffith; silent).

A DIFFERENT LIGHT BOOKSTORE, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Nov. 8 at 7, the feature will be "The Spider Woman" (1944, Roy William Neill).

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3587)—A program of French films, 1958-98; in French, with English subtitles. Nov. 4 at 2:30 and Nov. 6 at 7:30: "The Marquise of O. . . ." (1976, Eric Rohmer). . . . Nov. 4 at 6: "Hypotheses of the Stolen Painting" (1978, Raúl Ruiz) and "Le Camion" (1977, Marguerite Duras). . . . Nov. 6 at 2:30: "The Green Room" (1978, François Truffaut). . . . Nov. 7 at 2:30: "Le Boucher" (1969, Claude Chabrol). . . . Nov. 7 at 7:30: "Irma Vep" (1996, Olivier Assayas).

LINCOLN SQUARE, Broadway at 68th St.—The Second Annual Shorts International Film Festival will be held Nov. 9-11. (For information, call 228-4085.)

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St.
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at Broadway.
BEEKMAN, Second Ave. at 66th St.
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd St.
CHELSEA WEST, 333 W. 23rd St.
CINEMA I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CORONET CINEMAS, Third Ave. at 59th St.
CRITERION CENTER, Broadway at 44th St.
EAST 85TH STREET, First Ave. at 85th St.
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, Broadway at 84th St.
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, Third Ave. at 86th St.
EMBASSY 1, 2, AND 3, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th St.
FILM FORUM, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd St.
GOTHAM CINEMA, Third Ave. at 58th St.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th St.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, Broadway at 63rd St.
LINCOLN SQUARE, Broadway at 68th St.
METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, Broadway at 99th St.
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th St.
NEW YORK TWIN, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19TH STREET EAST 6, Broadway at 19th St.
OLYMPIA I AND II, Broadway at 107th St.
ORPHEUM VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
PARIS, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th St.
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th St.
REGENCY, Broadway at 67th St.
THE SCREENING ROOM, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd St.
64TH AND 2ND, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72ND STREET EAST, Third Ave. at 71st St.
STATE, Broadway at 45th St.
SUTTON 1 AND 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th St.
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, Second Ave. at 12th St.
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
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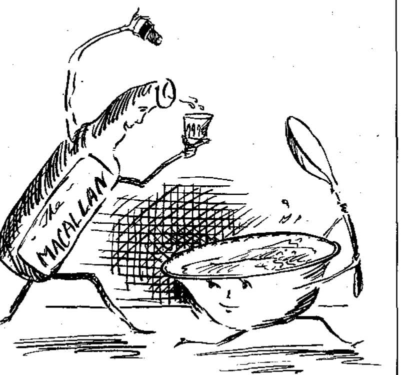

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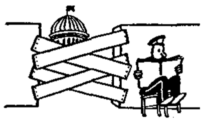
COMMENT

Is the city losing City Hall?



THE clearest sign that Rudy Giuliani is a Yankees fan may be the fact that he staged New York's official celebration honoring the World Series winners right on his own front steps. This shouldn't have been so unusual, since the steps of City Hall are New York's traditional spot for ceremonies, rallies, press conferences, and photo opportunities. About a month ago, however, the N.Y.P.D. put up a series of concrete barriers that turned City Hall's front plaza into what people in law enforcement like to refer to as a "secure zone." To the rest of us, that means no cars and no people. Getting yourself inside City Hall always used to take some explaining, but just walking up to it, climbing the broad flight of steps, and gazing at the exquisite Federal-style rotunda was a civic right.

Now the steps and the paved plaza are mostly empty, with police officers stationed at the concrete barriers to protect City Hall from terrorists—and from that other danger to democracy, tourists. Civic events that the Mayor does not favor as much as the Yankees—or civic events he disfavors, like protests—have been shunted to the southern end of City Hall Park, two blocks away. Other official ceremonies take place inside. (Even the restoration of the statue of Justice on top of City Hall, a perfect excuse for a ceremony on the steps if ever there was one, was marked, a few weeks ago, by an indoor observance at which invited guests watched the statue's unveiling on closed-circuit television.)

It is hard to know how much the blockading of City Hall reflects the Mayor's personal fondness for using barricades to keep things in line, as he has done at certain Fifth Avenue intersections, and how much of it is a legitimate response to the realities of terrorism. It certainly mirrors recent events in Washington. Since 1995, the year of the Oklahoma City bombing, traffic has been banned from Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. Pedestrians can still wander along the avenue, which in front of No. 1600 has now been gussied up with lots of flower-bedecked planters, so that the most famous section of the capital's most famous street now calls to mind one of those cities that has tried to save its downtown by turning the main shopping street into a pedestrian mall.

Those places never work, for the same reason that putting the White House and City Hall behind a cordon sanitaire doesn't work: they make what is real seem fake. The great idea of both Pierre Charles L'Enfant, who laid out Washington, and Joseph Mangin and John McComb, who designed City Hall, was that both buildings were to be parts of a living city, right in the middle of everything—close enough, almost, to touch. The essential requirement for a government building in a democratic society is that it look, and feel, accessible. It is symbolically part of the people's business, and it sits right on the people's street.

Monarchs are supposed to be inside a bubble. Presidents and mayors are not. We have long since passed the day when the President of the United States could ride in an open car, but until recently Presidential security generally surrounded the President himself and moved with him. Now, though, the White House cordon sanitaire has permanently altered the urban fabric of Washington, even when the President is nowhere near the capital.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue follows the closing to traffic of smaller side streets near the White House—a change that took place during earlier Presidencies. All this amounts to the suburbanization of the White House.

Now the suburbanizing blockades have moved to New York, the one place where the urban instinct has always seemed so strong that it couldn't be derailed by any threat—not even by the threat of terrorism. Terrorism, of course, is not to be taken lightly. But neither is the tradition of the public realm, which includes the tradition of civic buildings that are open to the people. Since when do you run a democracy from inside a Forbidden City?

—PAUL GOLDBERGER

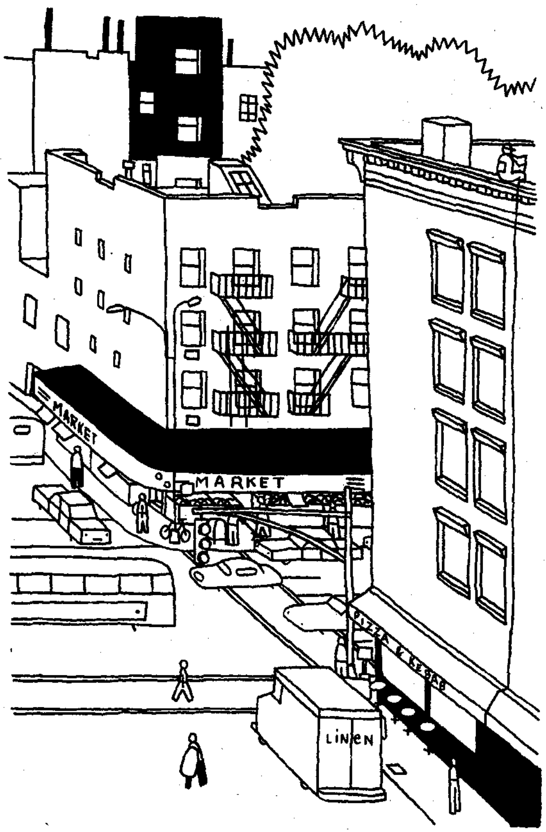
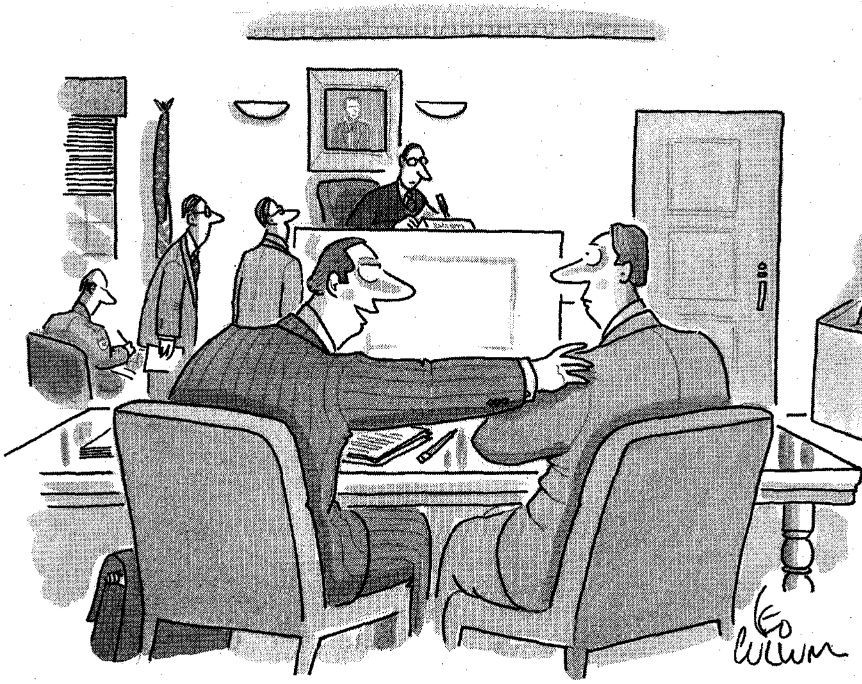


ILLUSTRATION BY LAURENT CILLUFFO

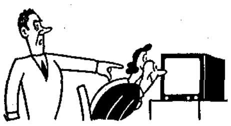


"You're doing fine. A little more perjury and you'll be out of the woods."

• •

DEPT. OF AIRWAVES

What will broadcasters have to give up for free TV?



Ever since Herbert Hoover, President Coolidge's Secretary of Commerce, guided the Radio Act of 1927 through Congress, broadcasters have been tasked with serving a hard-to-pin-down something called "the public interest." In return, they got to use the public airwaves at no charge. For seventy years or so, all went swimmingly. Radio (and then television) sent out programs like "Amos 'n' Andy" (and then "Melrose Place"), and the government stepped in now and then—to ban tobacco advertising, say, or to require some minimum of news, public-affairs, or children's programming. It was a nice, cozy, extremely profitable arrangement, and the vast industries it created have done their best to keep it that way.

Suddenly, thanks to digital technology, change is in the offing. Broadcasters will soon be able to squeeze six or more channels into what used to be one channel's worth of spectrum space, depending on how much of the newly freed-up bandwidth they choose to devote to transmitting crisper, high-definition pictures. In 1996, Senator Bob Dole, among others, recommended that rights to the new airspace be auctioned off. The Clinton Administration, however, fearing that the public interest might be compromised and that free TV might no longer be free if stations had to pay big money for this extra spectrum, decided to lend it to stations in return for a new batch of public-interest obligations. So, early last year, President Clinton appointed—what else?—a committee, the Advisory Committee on Public Interest Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters. The committee has held six barely noticed public hearings; a seventh and final one is scheduled for November 9th, and the committee's recommendations will follow. A draft of these now circulating to members has the potential to roil the broadcast industry and, perhaps, to affect elections in the year 2000.

Originally, the committee was to have had fifteen members; it soon grew to twenty-two. It is chaired by Norman Ornstein, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, whose official biography calls him one of "society's sages." Its co-chair is Leslie Moonves, the president of CBS Television, who has sometimes seemed torn between his loyalty to the broadcasting industry and his friendship with Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore. It also includes representatives of Native Americans, Latinos, African-Americans, children, and the deaf. "It's sort of a Noah's Ark theory—they put on every special interest," Newton Minow, a member, says. (Minow, when he was J.F.K.'s F.C.C. chairman, coined an imperishable epithet for American television: "a vast wasteland.")

The Clinton Administration's agenda is clear enough: it has circulated copies of a 1997 speech by another committee member—Barry Diller, chief of USA Networks. In it, Diller challenged the notion, promulgated by the Reagan Administration, that TV was a mere market commodity and should therefore be left alone. "We have been entrusted with spectrum by the government for free precisely so that we can both provide programming that is in the public interest and provide it to the public for free," Diller said, and urged broadcasters, in return for the additional TV spectrum, to "abolish all forms of the current system of political contributions" by airing all political advertising gratis. In a recent conversation, Diller added, "This is a business where if you're a birdbrain you have a thirty-five-per-cent profit margin. Many good broadcasters have a forty-to-sixty-per-cent margin. And you get it for free! . . . Broadcasters should pay through the nose."

Last week, Ornstein and Moonves circulated a seventeen-page draft containing the major recommendations to be considered at their upcoming final meeting. One that stands out asserts that "the market alone does not provide programming that can adequately serve children." It proposes, over time, a new education channel in each viewing area which would provide services ranging from children's programming and secondary education to adult education and job training, with an emphasis on serving "underprivileged and minority communities." The committee will urge that this effort be financed partly out of funds from future auctions of portions of the spectrum. The committee would also ask broadcasters to volunteer five minutes nightly for free "candidate-centered discourse" on each of the thirty days before an election, and would urge Congress to waive the equal-time requirements. And stations that reap windfalls by using their extra spectrum for additional channels rather than high-definition pictures would either pay a fee or set aside one of the new channels for "public interest purposes."

A consequential—and desirable—rec-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

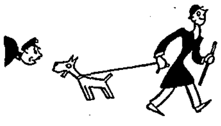
ommendation is mentioned in the draft almost as an aside: that "Congress consider ways to provide enhanced funding for public broadcasting." The committee has privately discussed an endowment of up to six billion dollars to permanently subsidize the nonprofit Public Broadcasting System. Such a plan would end, once and for all, the bickering over PBS—whether it should exist, and to what extent the government should pay for it. PBS, in short, would be forever.

These recommendations, of course, will go nowhere without support from the Republican-controlled Congress, and legislative prospects would shrink if the powerful National Association of Broadcasters should declare its opposition. But influential Republican committee chairmen like Representative W. J. "Billy" Tauzin, of Louisiana, and Senator John McCain, of Arizona, have already endorsed such ideas as trading spectrum for permanent PBS funding and free time to political candidates.

One might worry that broadcasters will end up getting the spectrum for free while the public gets nothing in return. A second worry is that the proposed campaign reforms are too modest. This is why Minow vows to issue a dissenting report calling on government to ban all paid political ads, as is done in most countries (a move others on the committee feel would run into First Amendment trouble). All of which is good reason to pay attention next week, when this quiet, awkwardly named committee tells America what's on its mind. —Ken Auletta

RAG TRADE

Man's best friend has a friend in Baltimore.



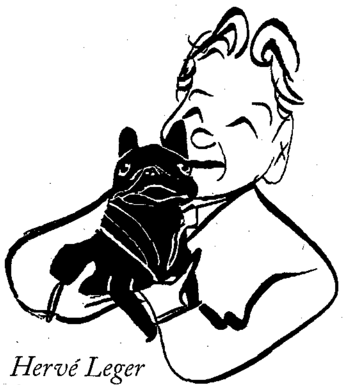
Hervé Leger was in a pickle. For months, the designer's French bulldog, Ming, had been ill with hyperkeratosis—warty growths on the nose—and a bad case of arthritis. An assortment of Parisian veterinarians had been shooting Ming full of steroids to combat the arthritis, but by early October the warty growth was still there. What with the flurry of the spring-summer, 1999, ready-to-wear shows coming up—booking models, fitting clothes on them, deciding whether their hair should be up or down or curly or straight—and dealing with a sick dog at home, Leger was a total wreck.

Help, however, was on the way. For most Parisians, Fashion Week means the grand *débarquement* of thousands of retailers, journalists, photographers, stylists, and models. But for Leger it meant salvation: Kim Hammond, D.V.M., would soon be checking into the Prince de Galles, a trusty black bag of American remedies in hand. Every March and October, the forty-six-year-old Dr. Kim, as he is called by his patients' masters, leaves his practice at the Falls Road Animal Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, and boards a flight to Paris to attend his fashion clients' ready-to-wear shows, and to attend to their pets.

Among Dr. Kim's official duties in Paris is the semiannual checkup he gives to Valentino's pugs Maggie, Molly, and Oliver over at the Ritz; this year, he also wrote several prescriptions for a Connemara pony named Jo, belonging to the Christian Lacroix press attaché Bérengère Broman, to take care of her hoof disease and asthma. "I have to be careful which clients I mention," he explained. "The owners don't want to appear to be second-guessing their home-town vet."

Dr. Kim is a fashion pureblood himself: his great-grandfather, Andrew Saks, founded Saks Fifth Avenue. So when his cousin, Peter Marx, who runs the family-owned Saks-Jandel department stores, invited him to the Paris shows a couple of years ago, the veterinarian couldn't resist. "Everyone in Paris loves their pets so much. People bring them to the shows, and to lunch, and we sit around and talk dogs," the Doctor said.

In between fashion-house calls, Dr. Kim finds time to attend most of the shows. Of last month's collections, he declared Dior "really great," and thought Chloe was "a little young, but good." As for Chanel, "Well, I better not say anything," he murmured. But Valentino, he said, "had some beautiful things—things I would buy a woman I was going out with." And he doesn't miss a party. "Puff Daddy's bash at Les Bains Douches—what a blast! And the one at the Moulin Rouge—the Saint Laurent one—was really wild. It was so funny to see all the old Yves Saint Laurent staff dancing to disco."



Hervé Leger & Ming

Meanwhile, Leger's Ming is doing just fine. Dr. Kim applied some keratolytic cream to her nose, and the unsightly warts just disappeared. "She's perfect," Leger told me. "Even her fur is thicker!" After the Valentino show, Leger invited Dr. Kim over for lunch. "I had another engagement," Dr. Kim said. Leger persisted. "He said, 'But Ming will be there!' " —Dana Thomas

THE BIG TIME

Two funny guys go Hollywood—almost.

Judging from the evidence of the two-man show "Dobie McDobie," which is currently at the Flea Theatre and includes a chainsaw duel performed in mime, an imaginary fork-throwing contest, and some of the most peculiar simulated masturbation imaginable, you would not think that the comic duo called Premium Bob has much to offer mainstream American entertainment. But one of the themes of the show, inspired by the pair's experiences over the past year, is the following: What happens when someone in Hollywood decides that you might be the next "Seinfeld"?

"There's a line in the show, 'Bring me the butt-licking schmoozers,' " David Latham, half of Premium Bob, said the other evening after rehearsal. "We have had our share of butt-licking schmoozers." Paul Boocock, Premium Bob's other half, added, "We tried to *be* butt-licking schmoozers. It didn't really work."

In the fall of 1997, Boocock and Latham, both New Yorkers in their mid-thirties, had a deal with ABC to star in a TV pilot, and they were planning to stage an Off-Broadway production of their show "American Style," which had been a cult hit in New York in 1996. A year later, they are pilotless and contractless, and, up until a few weeks ago, they were effectively nameless, having temporarily signed over to their theatrical producer the rights to the moniker Premium Bob.

The duo's wild Hollywood ride began in the summer of 1997, when they caught the attention of Jon Steingart, whose company, Mosaic Entertainment, produced Julia Sweeney's show "God Said 'Ha!' " "I thought, This is what people must have thought when they first saw Michael Palin and John Cleese," Steingart said recently from his office in Los Angeles. He signed them up and brought them to Los Angeles for two showcases; in the space of a few days, the L.A. *Times* had put them on the cover of its Calendar section, calling them "the spicy summer sausage on a table groaning with holiday cheese logs" (a compliment), and a yearlong option had been brokered with ABC for an unspecified sitcom pilot featuring two funny guys.

"They were saying, 'An edgier "Bosom Buddies" meets "A Perfect Stranger" for the nineties,' " Boocock said. "Or maybe it was 'A nineties "Perfect Stranger" meets an edgier "Bosom Buddies." ' "

Latham and Boocock were thrilled, if perplexed, by the methods of Hollywood. Accustomed to writing all their own material, they learned that they would not be expected to write anything for their prospective TV show. Instead, ABC and Steingart suggested that they work with the writers Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein, formerly of "The Simpsons." Oakley says, "It was really hard for us to believe that television executives had seen Premium Bob and responded so positively, because it is so weird."

Premium Bob, meanwhile, was anxious to start their new life. "We spent most of the year saying, 'Are we moving out to California this week?' " Latham recalled. " 'Should I quit my job this week, or is it going to be next week?' "

But by the beginning of 1998 it had become clear that no one was going to be moving anywhere: no final deal could be struck. There had been no movement for Premium Bob Off Broadway, either, because they could not commit themselves to a production while there was a chance that they might be whisked off to TV land at any moment. What's more, according to the deal they'd signed, Latham and Boocock were not allowed to use their name onstage without getting Mosaic's permission. They decided to do what they would have done if they had been characters in a Broadway musical: they put on a show. Opting to perform under the name Dobie McDobie, they appeared at the Here theatre last spring for a well-received three-week run; that show, in a slightly more evolved form, is now at the Flea. Boocock describes "Dobie McDobie" as "a story of non-events that never happened."

Jon Steingart, their erstwhile producer, views Premium Bob's Hollywood adventure as a success, even if no one ever got near a television camera. "A year ago, no one knew who they were, and now not only do people know who they are but they have money in their pocket. Most actors would be killing themselves to have that opportunity," he says.

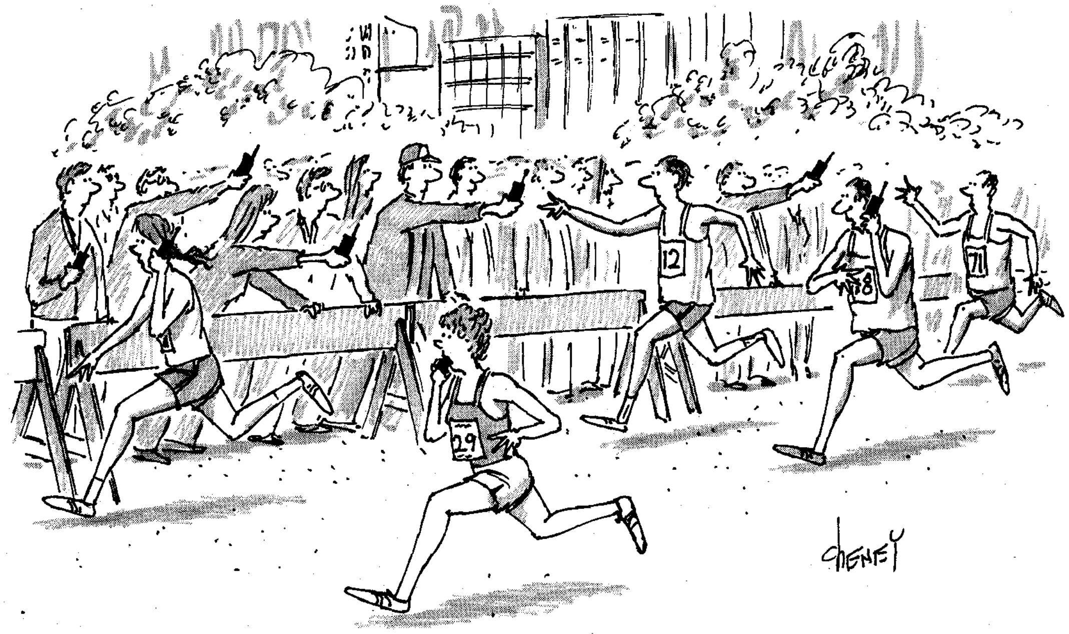
Boocock is less effusive. "To use a baseball metaphor, it is like they called us up in September for the majors and we didn't even get out of the locker room," he said. "Maybe for a second we got to sit in the dugout before the game."

"And my athletic supporter was far too tight," Latham said.

"It was constricting," Boocock agreed. "But I was willing to wear it."

Bill Oakley, meanwhile, hopes he will get a chance to write something for Premium Bob that might actually make it onto the nation's screens. "Maybe by the time we get a deal negotiated with them," he said, "television will have evolved to the point where America is ready to see Premium Bob."

—REBECCA MEAD



WIND ON CAPITOL HILL

For once in his life, Abe Hirschfeld is being taken seriously.

IT is the autumn of Abe Hirschfeld's years, his hair is turning orange, and his thoughts are moving toward a summing-up of his legacy. Born seventy-nine years ago in Poland, he emigrated to New York as a sixth-grade dropout after the Second World War, and quickly became a parking-garage magnate, a perennial office-seeker, a Jewish count (don't ask), and a reviled newspaper publisher. So why shouldn't he be the guy to figure out how to settle Paula Jones's sexual-harassment case against President Clinton?

"I call my philosophy the theory of practical simplicity," Hirschfeld explained the other day in the small office building by the Queensboro Bridge which serves as his headquarters. Seated under the gazes of his tank of freshwater fish and his lawyer and aide-de-camp Harvard Hollenberg ("I went to Harvard's law school," Abe says), Hirschfeld explained his proposal. "I will give Paula Jones a million dollars myself," he said. "Then, after the release of her case is signed, I recommend that the Presi-

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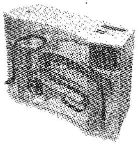

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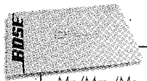

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dent resign, and Mr. Gore becomes President, and he immediately names Bill Clinton the Honorary President of the United States. And it is agreed that Roger [sic] Starr will get the first available seat on the Supreme Court. It's as easy as apple pie."

For ideas like these, you usually have to find people talking to themselves on the subway—a type Hirschfeld has been compared to during his long public career. But Hirschfeld's million in cash is on deposit at the Israel Discount Bank, so everyone involved in the case is paying attention to him. And even though he told some reporters last Wednesday that he was withdrawing his offer, he said the next day, "I'm not really pulling out. I still want to settle this thing."

Hirschfeld got the idea for the "Honorary President" business when, a few years ago, he helped ease out the leaders of two organizations that he belonged to—the Town Club and the Fifth Avenue Synagogue. So what would be Bill Clinton's duties as Honorary President? "Presumably ambassadorial," Hollenberg said. Clinton's lawyers have been offering about seven hundred thousand dollars to settle, but Jones's past and current lawyers have raised claims of more than a million dollars for their fees against any recovery the former Little Rock secretary receives. In other words, if Paula Jones is to see any money from this case she needs Hirschfeld's million.

Clinton's lawyers are not exactly objecting to Hirschfeld's involvement in the case, but they're not embracing him, either. (Hirschfeld is contesting a hundred-and-twenty-three-count state-tax-evasion case, so the President must be especially anxious to avoid being linked with him.) Still, as one lawyer involved in the negotiations puts it, "if Abe goes away, the whole thing falls apart." Which is, of course, just how he likes it.

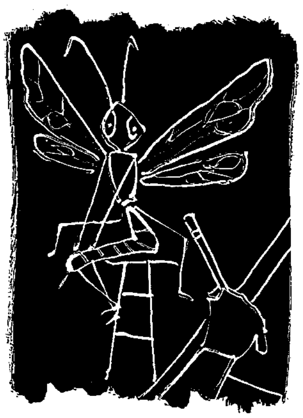
Hirschfeld long ago embraced the notion that there is no such thing as bad publicity. During his brief tenure as publisher of the *Post*, his appalled employees published a front page of the paper picturing its founder, Alexander Hamilton, weeping—and the page still adorns Hirschfeld's office wall. He revels in the long journey he has taken from his humble roots. "I call Le Cirque my McDonald's," he said. Still, he hasn't lost his eye for a bargain. "People give away twenty million to a university, and they put a plaque on the wall," he said. "I give a million to this woman, and it changes the world. And so far it's cost me nothing."

—Jeffrey Toobin

THE PICTURES

An expert looks at "Antz" under the microscope.

Deborah Ross, a passionate animal lover who has been observing and drawing two-legged, four-legged, six-legged, and other multi- or no-legged creatures for most of her two-score-plus years, has also been teaching animators and would-be animators how to observe and draw them. As soon as "Antz," the animated film from DreamWorks SKG, opened last month, Miss Ross hot-footed it over to a theatre to check it out. The movie, which immediately became No. 1 at the box office, is about the romance of a worker ant and a queen-to-be ant, as vocally played by Woody Allen and Sharon Stone.



Miss Ross, a no-nonsense, stalwart type with the lithe build of a dancer (she does that, too, usually practicing with former members of Ballet Senegal and Ballet Afrique), took her seat at the movie, nibbled on popcorn, and stewed placidly. "DreamWorks hired me to teach their artists-in-training as well as their full-on artists," she said. "The problem that artists and animators have with animals is that they have their own idea of what's true. I'd take the animators in my classes to the zoo and say 'Look! You have to *look!*'

"My drawings are very physical," she continued. "As a kid in Long Beach, California, I always had pets—grasshoppers, pollywogs, snakes, dogs, a pet rat who rode on the dog's back. I watched the way insects moved. I understand weight and motion, the type of shifts that take place in a body. I drew Peruvian seabirds for one Bronx Zoo exhibit, then I drew all the animals for their Jungle World exhibit. I went to Kenya, worked with the primatologist Shirley Strum, and illustrated her book 'Almost Human.' Then I fell in love with elephants and drew *them.*

"In California, all the movie studios set up small art schools of their own for their animators. Disney's been working on a dinosaur film for years. One studio has spent years doing 'Tarzan.' Whatever they're doing, I try to teach them to look at each animal, at which foot the animal has his weight on and where to use negative space, like the space between a rhino's legs, that will keep it true. My students are now working all over the place, for Warner's, Disney, for all the studios."

Miss Ross leaned forward intently as the movie started. She gave a little gasp as she watched the Woody Allen worker ant. "No," she said. "They have no teeth. No fingers. No lips. No noses. Just mandibles. No neck, just a shaft. This moving of theirs is, like, well, wrong." Then she chomped on some popcorn and leaned back in her seat.

The queen-to-be Sharon Stone ant appeared. "Her antennae are lovely," Miss Ross said, suddenly, with a gleeful whoop. "And her cinched waist. All that has to do with weight." She laughed at the bad-colonel ant, played by Christopher Walken's voice. "Colonel Cutter," she said. "Good name. Cutter is an insect repellent." Then she gave a burst of hooting giggles. "Aphids! They're drinking *aphids*. And look! The princess ant has breasts!"

Miss Ross seemed to be coming on board. "See the little spines on their shoulders?" she said, appreciating the verisimilitude. She applauded as a soldier ant grew wings and flew off with the princess. "They take one queen and start a new colony," she said. "Good. Very good." She was right. At the end of the film, Sharon Stone and Woody Allen start a new colony.

Miss Ross was sold on a scene featuring a pair of wasps named Chip and Muffy. "They even got the weight right for the wasps," she said, beside herself. "They got the body language right for the praying mantis, too. They looked. They *looked!* They did good on getting them to move right: how they walked, how they shifted their legs. What the hell. I guess I've been coöpted." —Lillian Ross

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ANNALS OF COMMUNICATIONS

THE LAST SURE THING

PointCast was once Silicon Valley's hottest startup. Rupert Murdoch's empire tried to buy it for almost half a billion dollars. What went wrong?

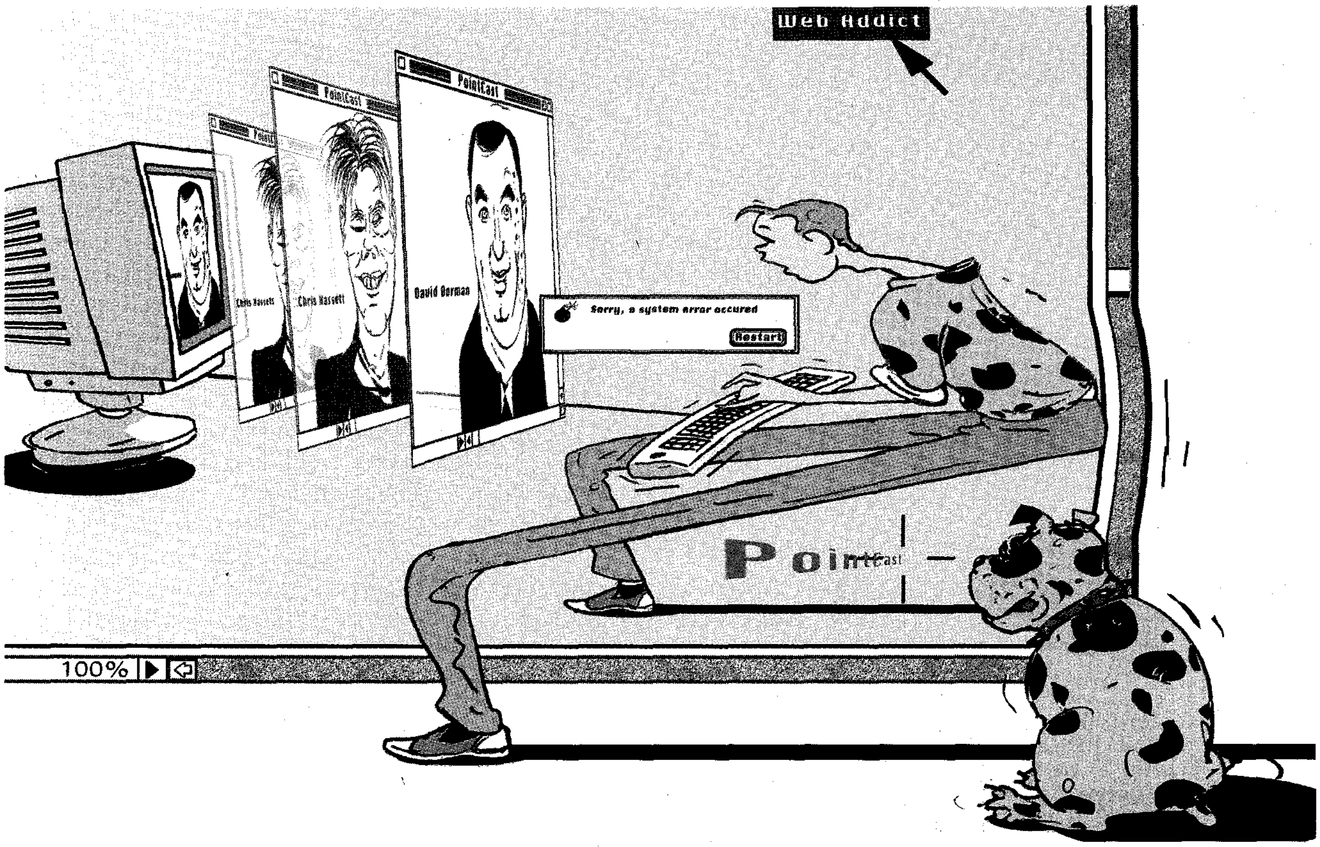
BY KEN AULETTA

SILICON VALLEY and Wall Street, like the press, usually heed the "three dogs barking" rule. Let one dog bark, and soon another joins in, and then another. The dogs barked in 1996 and early 1997 over "push technology" and its creator, a Sunnyvale, California, company called PointCast, Inc. The very thought of the riches to be made set off a cacophony. The V.C.s—venture capitalists—of the Valley were dazzled, and so were Wall Street and the press. One investment analyst suggested that PointCast—a company then adding five employees a week but having almost zero revenue—deserved to be valued at seven hundred and fifty million dollars. The March, 1997, cover of the magazine *Wired* read, "Push! Kiss Your Browser Goodbye: The Radical Future of the Media Beyond the Web." In 1996, PointCast's founder and C.E.O., Christopher R. Hassett, who was then thirty-four, had been saluted as CNET's newsmaker of the year, an honor whose former recipients included, among others, Marc Andreesen, of Netscape; Bill Gates, of Microsoft; Larry Ellison, of Oracle; and Scott McNealy, of Sun Microsystems. Hassett became a regular speaker at the many buzz-generating conferences that "new media" devotees attend, and he was invited to pose on his motorcycle for *Fortune*. That photograph showed a lean young man with tousled sandy hair and a taut, seemingly joyless smile.

The software product that Hassett and his engineer brother, Gregory, had invented allowed users to customize the Internet: to keep users from getting lost surfing the Internet ocean and "pulling" information off it, or getting beached by wheezing modems, PointCast aimed at "pushing" the information that a customer requested and delivering it when the computer was idle. After a customer registered with the PointCast Web site, this information—the front page of the *Times*, perhaps, or health-related news or up-to-date stock prices from fifteen companies—appeared as a screen saver, or was scrolled across the bottom of the computer screen. PointCast's revenues, like those of "free" broadcast television and radio, came from selling advertising. "We've combined the power of the Internet with the convenience of broadcast news," Chris Hassett declared in early 1996, when the service was launched. "This is the news format for the twenty-first century."

The noise surrounding PointCast captured the attention of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., the world's sixth-largest communications company. Murdoch's son James, who is twenty-five, had just been put in charge of new-media ventures for News Corp., and he reached out to Chris Hassett in December of 1996. "They were planning to go public that summer," James Murdoch says of PointCast. "We approached them and talked about working together." News Corp.'s initial offer was to buy PointCast for about four hundred and fifty million dollars. Teams of lawyers and investment bankers negotiated over this for weeks. Eventually, the Murdochs reduced the offer to about four hundred million dollars, with incentive clauses that would bring it closer to the original price—provided that PointCast met its financial projections. Although there is some dispute about whether Hassett or the PointCast board—or both—was to blame, the bid was rejected. Not long afterward, PointCast and "push" became yesterday's news, as often happens in the Valley. The new buzz surrounded "portals"—windows onto the Internet, like Yahoo! and Lycos, which assemble information from many sites.

PointCast executives and investors, meanwhile, reject analogies to other Silicon Valley meteors—General Magic,



"It may go down as one of the biggest mistakes in Internet history," an executive says of PointCast's failed negotiations with News Corp.

GO, Catapult, Wolff New Media, Hayes modems—that once streaked across the sky. They say that their product will again be as attractive as it was, and perhaps they are right. Today, an estimated hundred and twenty million computers are hooked into the World Wide Web, and the Internet economy—on-line shopping, business-to-business purchasing, and advertising—is expected to climb from about two hundred billion dollars this year to nearly a trillion dollars by 2002, according to the market-research company International Data. In this environment, everyone is guessing the way to the future.

THE short history of PointCast is more than a story of the highs and lows of a new-media company swept up in the latest gold rush. It is also a lens through which to observe the lust that Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner wrote about in "The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today"—the "golden road to fortune" pursued by those who moved West after the Civil War. The novel is populated by people who worship success, and who dream that "the country will ring with the fame of Beriah Sellers' Infallible Imperial Oriental Optic Liniment and Salvation for Sore Eyes—the Medical Wonder of the Age!"

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But Silicon Valley is not the hollow place that Twain and Warner's West was; today's gold rush is more complex. The Valley is home to more high-tech computer, communications, and software companies than any other place on the planet, and these companies now generate more than a fourth of all economic growth in the United States. "For me, money is not the big deal," says Parik Rao, a twenty-six-year-old engineer who became a millionaire during two years at Microsoft, and who was at PointCast until two weeks ago. "Work is the big deal. Seeing hundreds of millions of people using your software is really neat. I have friends who are artists, and they say the same thing I say about software."

Silicon Valley may occupy a large space in our imaginations, but the peninsula that harbors the Valley stretches a mere thirty-three miles. The Valley itself, which includes San Jose, now California's third-largest city, is an extended tree-lined suburb with one- and two-story high-tech glassed-in office buildings and with strip malls that include more Taco Bells than perhaps any other locale in America. The cities have familiar names—Palo Alto, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, Mountain View, Menlo Park—but they don't have real downtowns. Workers tend to wear Gap rather than Armani, to talk about software more than about Monica, to consult the gyrating price of their stock options before the baseball scores, and to unwind by engaging in "extreme sports"—bungee jumping, skydiving, hang gliding, white-water rafting, and wind-surfing. People like to say that they "multitask." Attention spans are reduced by E-mail beeps, mouse clicks, cell phones, and pagers, by news, stock prices, and sports scores streaming across a computer screen, and by cubbyhole offices without walls, where interruptions are frequent.

California may have a reputation for a languid life style, but the Valley moves with the speed of a Chaplin movie. Fifteen new companies are founded every week; according to Jaleh Bisharat, a Harvard Business School graduate who was until recently the senior vice-president of marketing at PointCast, people move from job to job

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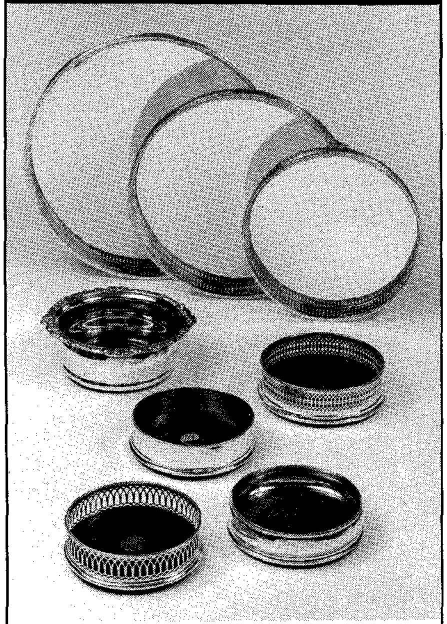

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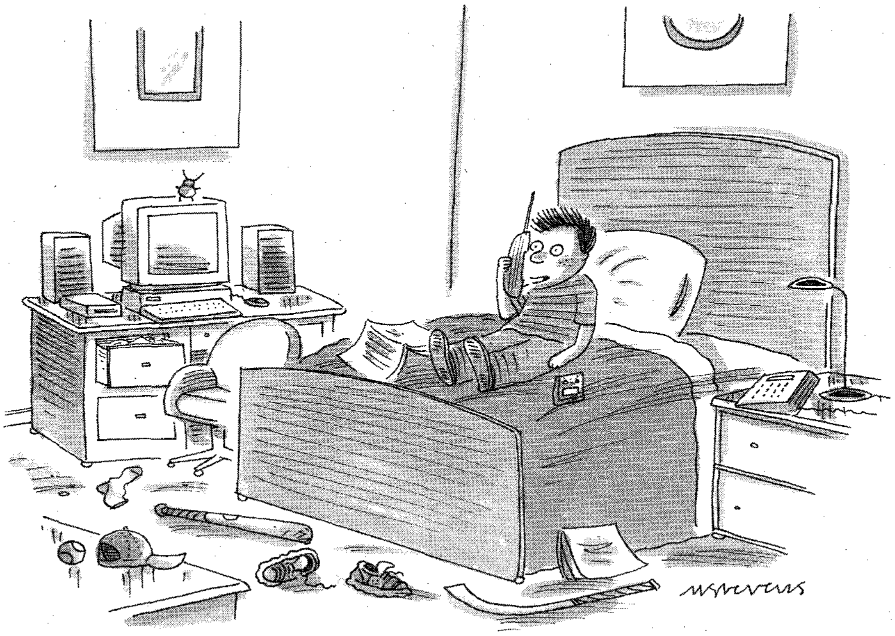
like nomads. "Anywhere I ever lived, anyone who jumped around a job before five years had elapsed was suspect. Here someone who has been in a job two years is considered a loyal employee," Bisharat says. Even the Valley's promotional literature inadvertently betrays the milieu's frenzy. "Peninsula & Silicon Valley Guide," published by Good Life Publications, cautions those seeking housing:

> The market is so hot many landlords don't even advertise. They just stick up a For Rent or For Sale sign. . . . Whether you're buying or renting, be prepared to move fast. If you wait even a few hours to act on a place you like, someone else will snatch it up. . . . Carry your checkbook so you can make a payment on the spot.

REAL estate is so scarce that until this year PointCast was divided between two locations. To get to its new headquarters, a green-tinted glass two-story building in Sunnyvale, one drives past palm trees and squat town houses and condominiums, past the strip malls that back up against the one- and two-story glassed-in high-tech-company headquarters—Silicon Magic, US Web, Sensory, Identix, Avcom, Conductus, which may or may not exist in a few years—past avenues with names like Mary and Maude, and an array of cranes and construction sites, including one across from PointCast.

PointCast was founded in 1992, by Christopher and Gregory Hassett and Chris's wife, Janet. After earning a degree from the University of Lowell, in Massachusetts, in 1984, Chris Hassett started a company that made a computer chip that allowed laser printers to work faster, and he sold that company to Adobe Systems in 1990. He worked a couple of years at Adobe, and then the three Hassetts pooled assets and launched PED Software, a company that made software that enabled customers to devise a personalized newspaper using on-line services like Prodigy and CompuServe. "The Internet wasn't the Internet," Chris Hassett recalls. "It was government and a few on-line services." Soon PED had attracted twelve million dollars in venture-capital funds from such Valley firms as Mohr, Davidow Ventures, Benchmark Capital, and Merrill, Pickard, Anderson & Eyre. By 1996, the Internet had become a chaos of proliferating Web sites, and the Hassetts saw that their software might bring order to it for baffled users. The Hassetts broadened their mission, changed their company's name from PED Software to PointCast, and, with their trademarked technology, announced that this free service could be downloaded off the Internet starting on February 13, 1996.

The applause commenced, and so did deals with content providers like the *Times*, the Boston *Globe*, Fox, and CNN, and so did a joint marketing partnership with Netscape, among others. By the fall of 1996, PointCast was registering two hundred and fifty thousand new viewers each month, and had



"Get me Room Service."

enticed thirty-six million dollars more in venture capital from such investors as General Electric Capital Corporation, the Compaq Computer Corporation, Softbank Holdings, and three newspaper chains—Knight-Ridder, Gannett, and Times Mirror. By September, nearly forty companies had signed on to buy advertising. By that December, Hassett had a deal with Microsoft to feature a PointCast icon in the next version of Windows. "It was incredibly heady. It was the next big thing," recalls Jonathan D. Feiber, a member of PointCast's board and a partner in the venture-capital firm of Mohr, Davidow, one of the initial investors in PointCast.

Because the Internet was an unknown, Feiber remembers, the company bet that its customers would be individual consumers rather than corporations, and that revenues might come from subscriptions as well as from advertising. And, because this new medium was mysterious, novelty and hype mattered more than they otherwise might have. In April of 1997, Forrester Research issued a report that began, "The hysteria around Push is mind-boggling. Everywhere you turn, there is an article on the topic or one of 40 vendors hyping their plans."

One such vender was FreeLoader, a browser company that pushed data from the Internet to desktops. As Stephanie Gruner has recounted in the magazine *Inc.*, this company—which had been launched in 1995 by two thirty-something pals in Washington, D.C., and had no income—spent ten thousand dollars a month to retain a New York public-relations agency to convince the press that FreeLoader was the "next big thing." Mark Pincus, a co-founder of the company, told Gruner, "The way to get real mind share is to realize that the media is a gigantic wind tunnel. It's a black hole that can never get enough content to suck through it." In late 1996, when the buzz surrounding "push" was peaking, the partners sold FreeLoader for thirty-eight million dollars. Today, the company is out of business, its Web site swallowed for a pittance by PointCast's.

LOOKING back, Chris Hassett recalls, "I spent thirty per cent of my time outside the company addressing conferences or media groups. It was very exciting." Although he denies that the experience was addictive, his former attorney, Allen L. Morgan, who is now a partner in the firm of Latham & Watkins, disagrees. "The problem was that for Andy Warhol's fifteen minutes Chris was the most famous guy on the Internet. He didn't always deal well with the attention. Chris is one among many. He started believing the company's press releases." Morgan remembers that once, during the negotiations with James Murdoch, he needed to reach Hassett and learned that "he was doing some magazine photo shoot at his house" and didn't want to be interrupted. Hassett denies this.

The negotiations in late 1996 with Murdoch came about because he had been dazzled by PointCast's software, describing it as "a change-the-world kind of product if done right." Murdoch envisioned using PointCast as "a billboard in the home," as a link to, say, News Corp.'s broadcast-satellite-TV offerings or *TV Guide.* Of course, PointCast would also be a way to transmit a worldwide Fox News service to computer screens as well as to TV screens. James's opinion carried weight with his father (who just this fall got his first P.C.). And Rupert Murdoch's company had embarrassingly failed to stake its flag on the Internet.

There are several views on why the takeover went sour. According to James Murdoch, Chris Hassett wanted to do the deal, but the PointCast board, led by the venture capitalists, who owned about a third of the company, spurned the offer. "People involved in the company thought they'd be the next Netscape. They hung out for more," Murdoch says. Chris Hassett, who with his wife and brother still owns twenty-two per cent of the company, acknowledges that the negotiations were torturous. "There's a story to tell," he says, but he won't tell it. Kevin R. Harvey, of Benchmark Capital, which owns seven per cent of the company, says that the discussions "just kind of went away."

"It may go down as one of the biggest mistakes in Internet history," Martin Nisenholtz, the president of the *Times'* Electronic Media Company, says of the failed negotiations. The true culprit is hubris, according to Nathan Myhrvold, who is the chief technology officer of Microsoft, a company that is

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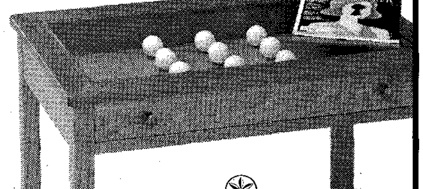
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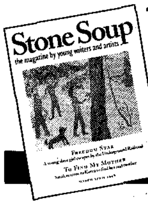
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not immune from accusations of hubris. In an E-mail exchange with me, Myhrvold wrote, “Starting a company requires more suspension of disbelief than any fairy tale. You must envision something—a company—where there is nothing, and hold that vision in your head. . . . I know something about this syndrome because much of this happened to me when my company was talking to Microsoft about being acquired. My company was low-profile compared to Hassett. But, even so, many people advised me not to sell out, that I was selling out cheaply, etc. . . . With all this heady talk swirling around, it is hard to be rational.”

THE Murdoch offer and the celebratory notices probably blinded Hassett and PointCast. For example, PointCast couldn’t deliver data to P.C.s at night or in the early morning, because it overlooked a simple fact—that many people don’t leave their computers on overnight. When PointCast tried to speed its data during regular hours, the narrow bandwidth became clotted with traffic, resulting in delays. The servers linking the PointCast network to the information suppliers and to the customers became choked with traffic. The company concedes that, although new customers continued to sign on, two-thirds of them soon fled the service, because of what they considered poor performance.

PointCast’s weakness, at bottom, was management. Although well into the spring of 1997 Chris Hassett continued to make speeches championing PointCast as a media company, and a worthy rival to such emerging giants as A.O.L. and Yahoo!, his directors came to feel that, as an entrepreneur, he lacked the management experience to fix the service, and to take the company to the next level. “You’re always trying to balance the needs of an entrepreneur with the needs of the business,” says Jonathan Feiber, who measures his words as if they could cost him money. “We talked to Chris at length and decided the right thing to do was to bring in a C.E.O.,” he added. This was not uncommon in the Valley; for instance, Netscape recruited the former telephone and Federal Express executive James Barksdale to direct a talented programmer, Marc Andreessen, and the Yahoo! founders recruited Timothy A. Koogle, a forty-seven-year-old former Motorola executive, as their C.E.O. At PointCast, Hassett resisted the effort, at first suggesting that the board simply recruit a manager to report to him, but the board insisted on hiring a new C.E.O.

The company announced in June that Hassett would step down as C.E.O. but remain as chairman, and in the meantime it would search for a world-class media executive. Hassett and the board then signed a severance agreement. (This agreement, which was not initially made public, called on him to resign as chairman “when asked,” and specified that as chairman he would “not be involved in operations.”) The hunt for a new C.E.O. included a roster of candidates that reads like a *Who’s Who* of up-and-coming media executives. Most spurned the overture.

One who did not was David Dorman, who was the C.E.O. of Pacific Bell when that Baby Bell company was acquired by SBC Communications, in early 1997. By saying yes, Dorman was leaving a company with fifty thousand employees for one with two hundred and sixty. He had turned aside bigger job offers, one of them at @Home, a cable-modem company offering high-speed access to the Internet, and another at Apple Computer, which had talked to him about replacing its acting C.E.O., Steven Jobs. Upon announcing, in October, 1997, that Dorman would become PointCast’s new chairman and C.E.O., Kevin Harvey, a board member, said that Dorman’s mission would be to build “the biggest new-media company in existence.” It was a case of three dogs barking, or so PointCast hoped.

All this appealed to Dorman. At forty-four, and after seventeen years with phone companies, he was ready for an entrepreneurial dalliance, and he liked the model of Barksdale at Netscape. Seated in his glassed-in office this September, and wearing a striped open-necked shirt, dark slacks, and polished tasselled loafers, Dorman,

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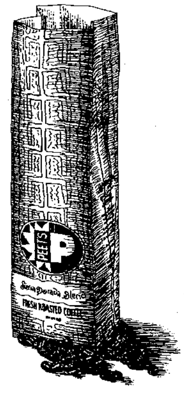

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who retains an Atlanta drawl from his boyhood, offered another reason for saying yes: convergence. PointCast would identify its audience (the media model), and then take its free service (the service model) and ram that audience—an upscale one—down the throats of advertisers.

Dorman did not mention a further inducement, which can be found in papers filed with the S.E.C. in 1998. Outlined there are the generous terms of Dorman's employment agreement, which included a signing bonus of $1.43 million, an annual salary of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, a bonus of $1.8 million in 1999 if the company reached three million viewers, and a low-interest loan to buy nearly two million shares of common and preferred stock. Another unannounced condition of Dorman's employment appears to be that Chris Hassett would depart as chairman, and he did so, quietly (with the added stipulation that he could not disparage the company). Gregory Hassett remained on the board but had a reduced operating role.

From the beginning, Dorman was blunt. He praised the company's product, but cautioned that it had been over-hyped. He urged PointCast to focus on problems: why it was losing as many customers as it was gaining, and whether it had the right customers. The company needed to learn what customers expected, and improve the service, but it also needed to shift its emphasis from individual to corporate customers. "This thing had taken off beyond anyone's imagination," he explains, "and it wasn't ready for prime time." Dorman accelerated technical changes to improve the product, to speed the service, and to eliminate traffic jams. Within the company, he is given credit for turning it around. "Chris had been more of an entrepreneurial C.E.O.," says Lev Belov, PointCast's Russian-born senior director of engineering, who is thirty. "Lots of ideas. Lots of energy. But less focus. Less methodology. Dave clearly is a great combination of both."

CHRIS HASSETT, who now lives in New York, challenged this chronology when I spoke with him recently. He praised PointCast as "a valuable asset," but his refusal to disparage the company weakened, and he said, "PointCast lost its buzz beginning in June, when I left. There wasn't the ability at the company to articulate its message when I left." Actually, the buzz had vanished before June, and, what was more troublesome, the demand for "push" was diminishing. The difference between "push" and "pull" blurs when one sets aside, say, twenty favorite Web sites with "bookmarks," or when corporations can program their internal Intranet to pull, or push, a steady stream of up-to-the-minute sales and inventory figures.

Despite this altered landscape, PointCast decided in the spring of 1998 to offer its stock to the public. According to papers filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, it would auction seventeen per cent of the company to the public at an initial price of between ten and twelve dollars per share. Since PointCast had nearly twenty-five million total shares, it was valuing the company at approximately two hundred and fifty million dollars, or about two hundred million dollars less than the failed Murdoch offer.

An I.P.O., however, requires full disclosure to investors of any looming dangers, and this one contained many warnings: PointCast, for instance, not only had the same number of customers—1.2 million—in the first quarter of 1998 that it had had a year earlier but had "experienced a low retention rate," because of "poor performance." Moreover, although the company had improved its performance with new software upgrades, its losses had doubled from 1996 to 1997, leaving it with "an accumulated deficit" of fifty-seven million dollars, and these losses would continue "for the foreseeable future." And there was this: Microsoft was expected to introduce "a directly competitive product."

Who would invest in a company with so many red flags? I asked the question of Jonathan Feiber. "I don't think this document is significantly different from others," he said. And, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, of the nearly five thousand I.P.O.s initiated between May, 1988, and July, 1998, nearly a third no longer trade their stock and forty-four per cent sell at a market price below the original offering price. In any case, PointCast with-

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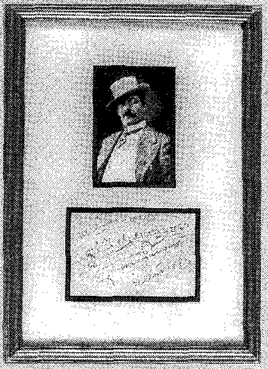

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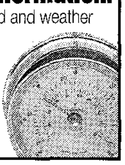

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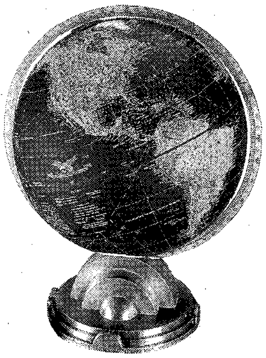

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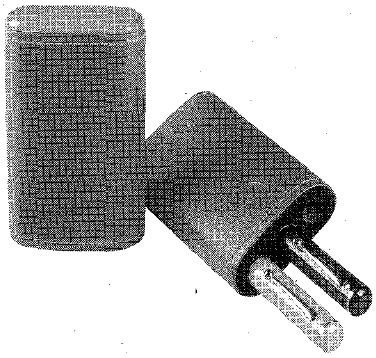

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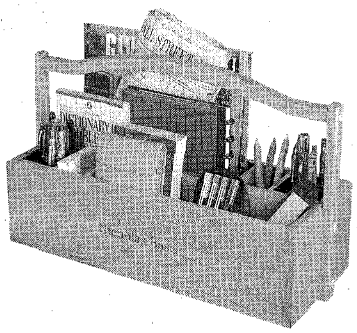

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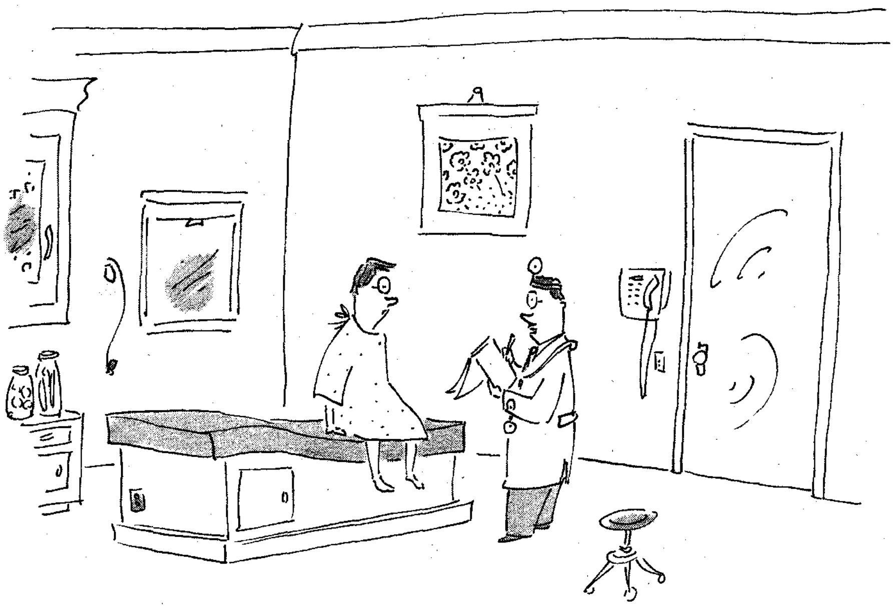

"You're not ill yet, Mr. Blendell, but you've got potential."

• •

drew the I.P.O. in July, and for the rest of the summer David Dorman maintained a gruelling schedule of visits to potential strategic partners, including the television networks, Michael Bloomberg, Murdoch, and portal and computer and telephone companies. Few pursued the overture.

Unquestionably, the competition that PointCast confronts is fiercer today than it was at any earlier point. With technology evolving to a point where customers may have "instant access" to the sometimes slow Internet, the cable and telephone industries have become rivals, and so have portal services, like Snap! and Infoseek, which were recently acquired by NBC and Disney, respectively. In mid-September, in his deliberate drawl, Dorman told me that he was confident that PointCast has solved the service problems, and he rejected the notion that the passive-viewing model is finished. Rather, he said, "it's the passive delivery that matters." Dorman compared PointCast to the home delivery of newspapers, which induced people to read more because it was so convenient. "With PointCast," he said, "you don't have to log on, go to a Web site. As with broadcasting, people don't want to work hard to retrieve information." Television is a "lean-back" medium, he says, while computers are a "lean-forward" medium. PointCast, he believes, can be both, since users can either sit back and receive data or lean forward and retrieve more in-depth information. Dorman, in short, wants to persuade a listener that PointCast remains, if not the next big thing, an ongoing big thing.

ON the East Coast, Chris Hassett's life has changed. He has more time, and a new startup company, Prizepoint Entertainment. He will not discuss this project except to say that it will be an entertainment Web site that "you go to for a particular purpose," and that his wife, Janet, will work with him. "We aim to be as successful as, or more successful than, the previous company I started," he says. Hassett works out of an old building with a creaky elevator in the garment district, where, he says, most of the electronics were sewing machines and thus he had to replace copper wires with fibre wires. When I spoke with him, in a windowless, bare-walled conference room, his posture was ramrod straight. He settled in New York, he said, because "technology and media have always been sisters." He went on, "The Internet five years ago was technology. Now it's media. Media, in my mind, is centered in New York. I can buy technology. What I have to do is hook into a media company." East Coast or West Coast, Hassett hasn't forgotten the value of spin. After consulting with his public-relations agency, he urged me to hold my story until later this year, when it could coincide with the expected launching of his new company.

On the West Coast, I'm not sure whether Dorman is spinning when he tells me that soon he expects to announce the major alliance or sale he has been seeking. (In September, he had expected to announce one by mid-October. "A deal's not done," he said then. "But the prospects are high.") I'm even less sure about the spin after hearing Dorman describe the "magic" of the Valley: "The last two years have been a time we'll look back on and say never has more money been made in a shorter period of time. The convergence of the economy and the stock market and the Internet phenomenon—it's magic. We've never seen anything like the Internet. The Amazons, the companies that supply the plumbing for it—the Ciscos—and the market got behind it in a big way." When Dorman graduated from college, in 1975, he and his classmates gravitated naturally to big companies. "I talk to college students today and they say, 'I'm packing my Saturn and going to San Francisco and going to work for a startup.'"

It's the magic of Cisco, whose stock price is eight times as great today as it was three years ago, and many of whose employees, like those at Microsoft, are millionaires. It's the magic of Yahoo!, which took its stock public in 1996 for just over eight dollars a share and today trades at more than fifteen times that, though its earnings are relatively modest. It's the magic of eBay, Inc., an on-line auction company. Despite a shaky stock market, its thirty-one-year-old chairman, Pierre Omidyar, watched his shares jump in value nearly three times, to six hundred and eleven million dollars, on September 24th, the day the stock went public; Benchmark Capital, a PointCast investor, has watched its six-and-a-half-million-dollar investment in eBay multiply to seven hundred million dollars. But it's also the magic of biotech stocks earlier in the decade, and how they rocketed, then crashed. It's the magic of three dogs barking. ♦

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SHOUTS & MURMURS

HUMOR THY FATHER

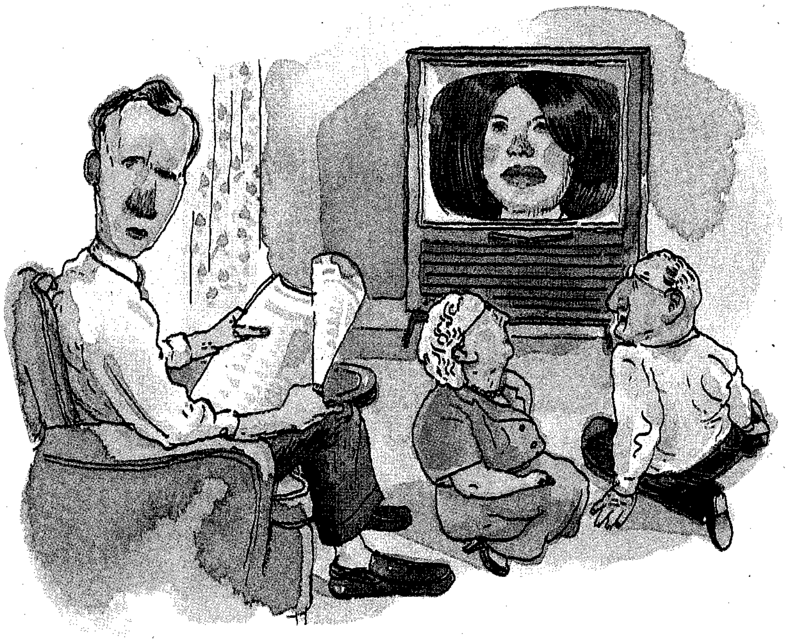
BY STEPHEN SHERRILL

It's gotten so that you can't even watch the evening news with your family anymore. First it was the Starr report, and now each day brings us closer to hearings on the same tawdry subject matter. Before it's all over, millions of us will face the same dilemma: What about the parents? What do you tell them when they ask about Monica and Bill?

First, you should know that it's perfectly natural to feel uneasy talking about unconventional sex with your parents. I'll never forget the first time (last week) one of my parents asked me, "Son, what's a [vulgarism for oral sex]"? No child is prepared for that question. I hadn't expected to talk about that with my parents for years—perhaps ever.

Yet discussing this unfortunate situation doesn't have to be traumatic. In fact, with care and patience you can turn this sordid affair into a real learning opportunity and a chance to become closer to your parents.

Of course, like any responsible child, you should try to filter out the most graphic material. But anybody with two seventy-year-olds knows that's easier said than done—parents often enjoy watching news and other public-affairs programming, and the Starr documents are found in many of their favorite publications.



BARRY BLITT

Likewise, watch what you say. Often, it may seem as though parents aren't listening—when they appear to have fallen asleep in their chair, for instance—but they take in more than you think. Especially avoid joking about the scandal in their presence, as you might find them innocently repeating your words at a dinner party without knowing what they mean.

Eventually, though, you have to accept that parents are going to pick up bits and pieces one way or another. If nothing else, they'll hear things about it from parents whose children aren't as vigilant as you. After all, you can't just keep them locked up in the house all day long.

Parents have a natural curiosity. So don't be surprised when they turn from their book clubs, volunteer work, or mall walking and begin asking those first awkward questions about raunchy sex in the Oval Office. When this happens, the most important thing is to be prepared. Parents are quite intuitive: they can tell when you're sickened or revolted. Avoid reactions like shuddering or groaning or staring at them with your mouth open, and do your best to remain calm and relaxed. When discussing dirty, smutty sex with my parents, I found sipping ginger ale, nibbling saltines, and sitting with my head between my legs while taking deep breaths all to be helpful.

And just because they're asking questions doesn't mean that they're ready for the answers. Don't give them more information than they're capable of processing. But also take the questions seriously—their elderly innocence is like an inborn lie detector. Be truthful, without being specific. An example:

Parent: What's all this I keep hearing about a cigar?

You: Uh, wow, O.K., well, [Parent], the President was with Monica and he, uh, had a cigar.

Parent: Did he smoke it?

You: No, Monica was just . . . holding it for him.

Parent: Why was she holding it for him?

You: It's what two people do when they love each other. I have to go now. Goodbye.

Keep in mind that your parents will look to you for cues on what to think of these lewd, illicit sex acts. Assure them that these filthy, obscene activities aren't shameful—at least not *completely* shameful.

Finally, while creating an environment in which parents can question and explore, be sure to maintain control of the dialogue. If you do find it becoming too involved, pretend like you can't breathe, and start coughing violently. Their natural protective impulses will be triggered, and by the time they've fetched you some water and you've done the "I'm O.K., I'm O.K.," they'll probably have forgotten all about it and be on to something else.

If that fails, another method—which works best on older parents—is to say that you have no idea what they're talking about and they must have been dreaming. That should buy you a little time, anyway (in my case, four days). Of course, every family is different. With some, the coughing bit doesn't work, but telling them it's all just a new TV sitcom might do the trick. With others, a simple "I can't have this discussion—it's just too gross" will suffice.

The point is, when phrases like "to completion" and "the President indicated that Ms. Lewinsky should perform oral sex while he talked on the phone, and she obliged" are commonplace, we're clearly living in different times. We can't expect our parents to maintain their innocence forever. But if you handle this difficult stage with a little patience, a strong stomach, and a lot of love you'll find that your parents won't just be your parents. They'll be your best friends. ◆

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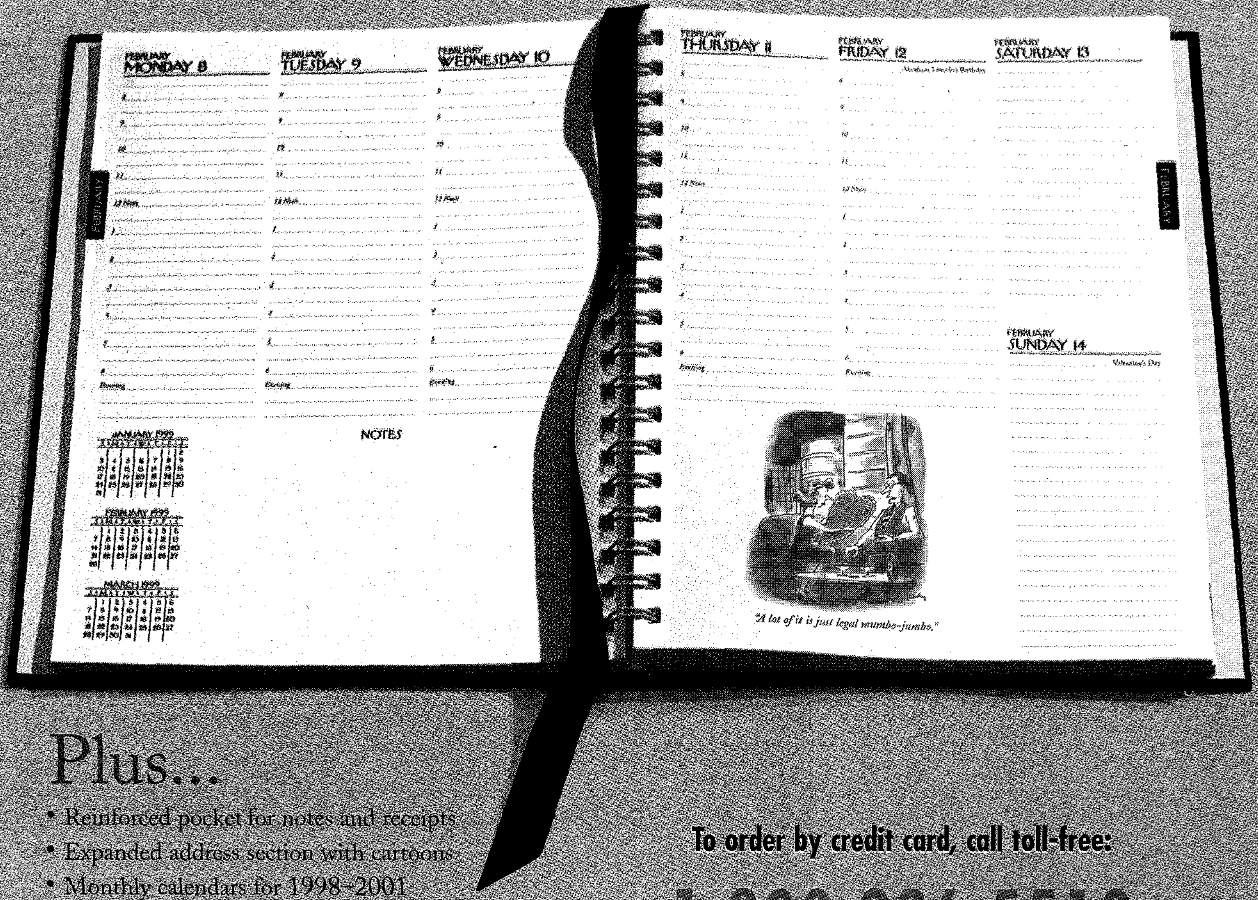

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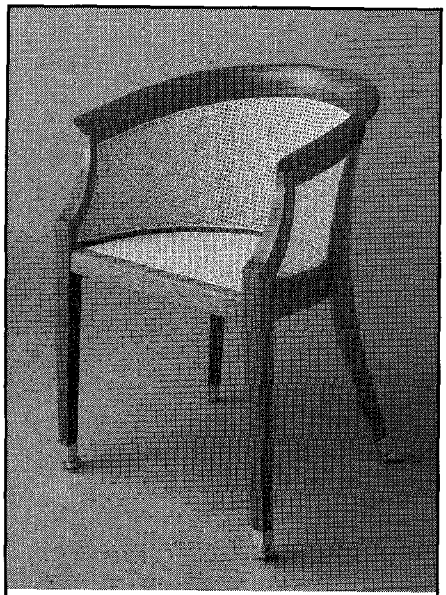

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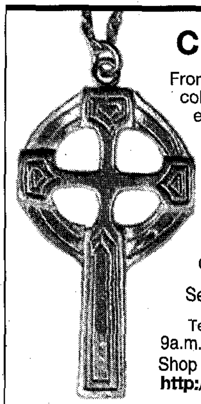

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RECKONINGS

FREUD RISING

An embattled new exhibit shows that the Viennese visionary has outlasted the wars against psychoanalysis.

BY DAPHNE MERKIN

As those of us know who have come of age after the dawn of psychoanalysis, there are no accidents. So perhaps some hidden, symbolic intent explains why the Freud exhibit at the Library of Congress has been vexed almost from its conception, in early 1993—igniting a protest that led to an extended postponement—and why the exhibit continues to show signs of inner conflict now that it's mounted. On a Saturday morning in mid-October, two days after "Sigmund Freud: Conflict and Culture" opened, I was taken through it by Michael Roth, the forty-one-year-old Princeton-trained historian who is its curator. It's an ambitious show, drawn from the library's trove of more than eighty thousand items, together with loans from the Freud Museums in London and Vienna. Already, the home movies, which feature an avuncular, courtly Freud playing with his dog and cooing at babies, had conked out, leaving an impassive video monitor for visitors to stare at. Roth excused himself and went off in search of technical assistance, while I moved on to the next case,

Guardians of the couch: A 1994 gathering of members of the New York Psychoanalyti

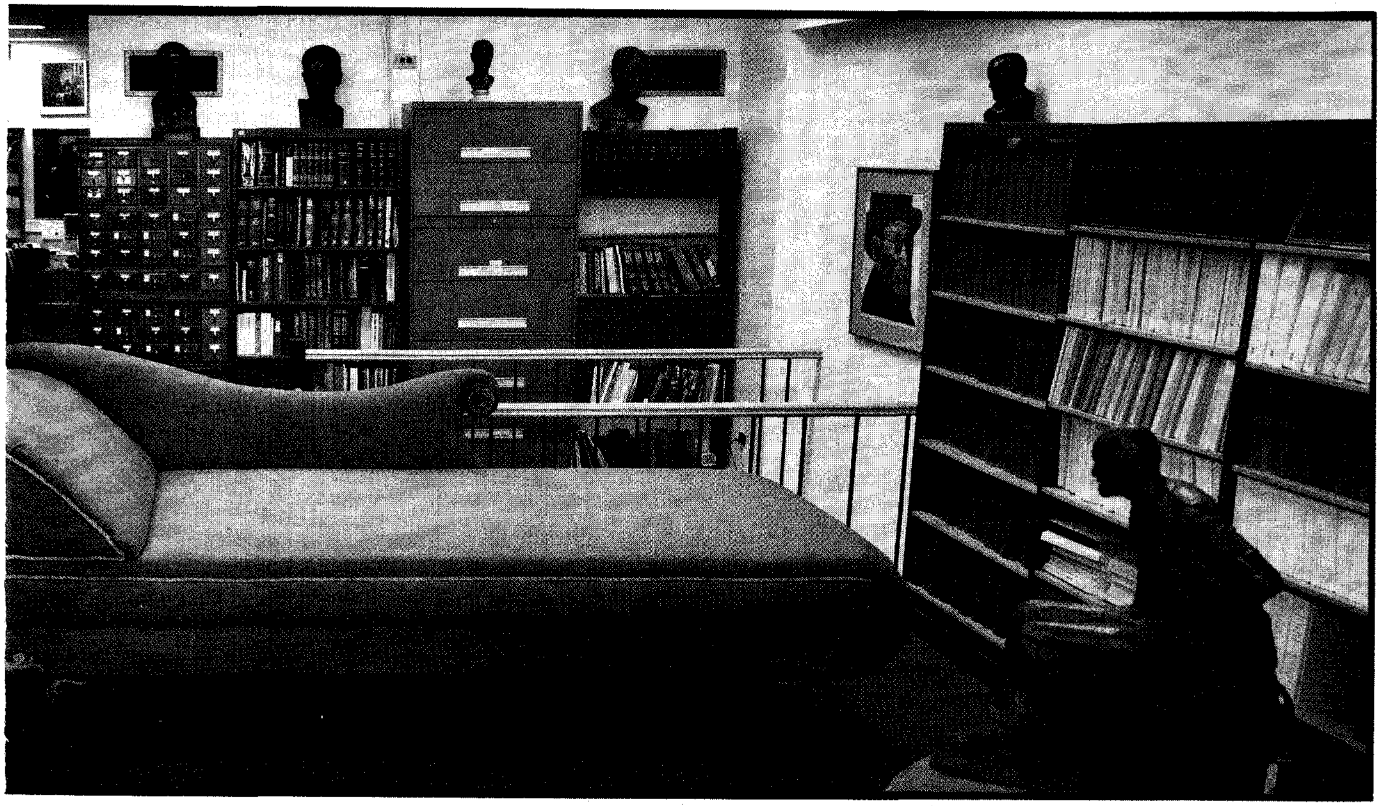
where I gazed in astonishment at a chunky intaglio ring on display. Made of gold and carnelian, it looks like something that Don Corleone might have favored, but it was in fact worn by Freud and a select circle of devoted followers, who began meeting in 1902 on Wednesday evenings at Freud's house. Although the group was officially known as the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, it was eventually referred to, with ominous-sounding brevity, as "the Committee."

I suppose I was reminded of "The Godfather" because of a lecture I had attended the preceding evening, as part of a conference called "Freud at the Millennium," organized by a group known as the International Institute of Object Relations Therapy, on the occasion of the exhibit. The talk was by Ernst Falzeder, an Austrian scholar who considers himself a "revisionist," a designation that allows its bearer to take a position on Freud somewhere between the usual extremes of adulation and denigration. He gave a witty account of the ways in which Freud fostered a hero-worshipping, master-disciple atmosphere by practicing "a self-immunizing strategy of character assassination." Freud didn't hesitate to play favorites or to excommunicate those who resisted his dominance. "It was Jung's behavior toward me," he wrote, "not his view of the libido, that destroyed his intimacy with me." Those who deviated from his road map (including, eventually, members of the original Committee, such as Sándor Ferenczi and Otto Rank) were labelled neurotic or psychotic. One analyst whom Freud had encouraged for years committed suicide nine months after receiving a letter from him which said, "I request that you do not make the intended visit with me. . . . I no longer desire personal contact with you."

This brutal, conquistador streak in Freud has been amply demonstrated in the past twenty years by such vehement anti-Freudians as the English professor Frederick Crews, who abandoned his faith in the psychoanalytic approach to literature in the late seventies and has since made a career of taking a sledgehammer to his former idol, and Peter Swales, who was once a promoter for the Rolling Stones and now devotes himself to researching Freud's dark side (in an effort to prove, for example, that Freud had an affair with his sister-in-law). But Freud is far too complicated a figure to be reduced to his failings. One of the strengths of the exhibit is that, without undue reverence, it conveys what Freud termed his "greed for knowledge" and the undeniable courage with which he pursued his ideas. Indeed, as I stood in front of the ring and read Roth's accompanying text, I had an almost visceral sense of the mystique that once inhered in this most hybrid (and, some have argued, least scientific) of sciences, and of the totemic power of Freud himself.

Was Freud a revolutionary genius on the order of Copernicus and Darwin (two thinkers he compared himself to) or an inspired charlatan? That depends on whether you ask one of the true believers who sit on the board of the Sigmund Freud Archives, which controls access to his papers, or one of the passionate dissenters in the Crews camp. Born Sigismund Schlomo Freud in 1856 (he was called "*mein goldener Sigi*" by his mother), and trained as a neurologist, he initially sought a remedy for the suffering of hysterical patients through the use of hypnosis, a method he had been exposed to when he went to Paris, in 1885, to study with the neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot. But throughout the eighteen-nineties Freud confided his doubts about hypnotic suggestion, along with his ideas about the importance of unconscious wishes as expressed in dreams, to Wilhelm Fliess, a Berlin physician. In the summer of 1897, he began his own self-analysis; that fall, he formulated the existence of both the Oedipus complex and infantile sexuality; and in 1900 he published "The Interpretation of Dreams." "The talking cure" (as it was dubbed by Anna O., an early patient of Freud's colleague Joseph Breuer) was off and running.

Freud's notions about the significance of unarticulated psychic mechanisms such as "repression" and "resistance" met with incredulity as well as fascination from the start. But the debate about the



Society, preëminent among the many institutions that dot the Freudian landscape. Photograph by Frédéric Brenner.

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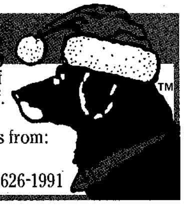

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value of his legacy is livelier than ever, because, as we all know, psychoanalysis is a profession under siege, having lost much of its ground to Prozac, H.M.O.s, and a general lack of conviction as to its curative effects. When Harold Blum, the director of the Freud Archives, first proposed the show, the Freud-bashing contingent immediately assumed that the exhibit would be the equivalent of a lovefest. Swales circulated a petition (signed by, among others, Oliver Sacks, Gloria Steinem, and a granddaughter of Freud's), and the library beat a tactical retreat, claiming that it was short of funds. Crews was delighted. "The motive behind the exhibition," he said, "was to polish up the tarnished image of a business that's heading into Chapter 11."

Michael Roth, who was plucked virtually out of the blue to be the show's curator, was himself the object of skeptical antagonism from both pro- and anti-Freudians. Although he had published a book on Freud, he was seen as an unlikely choice, if only because he didn't belong to either camp but seemed to represent a scrupulously disinterested historical viewpoint. (His good looks and charm, and the fact that he was from California, didn't help his cause.) While the dissenters feared that Roth would be merely a pawn of Blum and company, the response from the keepers of the flame was, as Roth puts it, "Who the hell are you?" Either way, the question was whether Roth was an *echt* Freudian. "No one asked me," he points out ruefully, "whether I was a Flaubertian when I taught Flaubert."

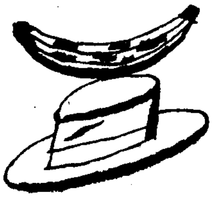
TODAY, as you stand in the resplendent room in the Jefferson Building where "Conflict and Culture" is housed, it's hard to see what all the fuss was about. The exhibit, set against a background of peach-colored walls, creamy moldings, and palatial touches of gilt, looks streamlined in the best MOMA tradition. It has been organized thematically, rather than chronologically, and has a little something for everyone—what Cheryl Regan, the exhibition's director, describes, in the lingo of museum management, as "multiple access points." Tourists and their kids will get a kick out of cleverly edited videos containing clips from "The Flintstones" and "Marnie," in which psychoanalytic concepts are comically appropriated; scholars can linger over a select number of fetishized objects, including an envelope that once held the cocaine Freud experimented with, and a telegram, consisting of the single, misspelled word "succesful," that he sent to his wife in 1909 from America, when he made his only visit here, to receive an honorary degree at Clark University.

The manuscript of "Civilization and Its Discontents" is on view, as are other major works; the original documents, most of them written in German, in a forward-sloping, spiky script, are kept under glass, to satisfy the conservation people, who worry about "tan lines" (i.e., shadows falling on the page), while pertinent paragraphs are "exploded" on orange cards. (Cameo photographs and prints often nestle next to the text, illuminating the period.) Perhaps the most surprising document, given the stance that psychoanalysis would later take on homosexuality, was a letter that the seventy-nine-year-old Freud sent to an American woman who had written to him about her son. The letter, written in English, is not only kind but independent-minded: he tells this distraught mother that she has nothing to be ashamed of, and that homosexuality (a word she had been too embarrassed to use) is not a disease.

In a questionably macabre touch, the 1979 death mask of Sergei Pankejeff—a.k.a. the Wolf Man—is displayed, as is one of the watercolors that he bartered for psychoanalytic treatment. Roth told me with amusement that Pankejeff used to pick up the phone and say "Wolf Man here," adding that Crews had wanted to know whether the exhibit would include the Wolf Man's statement to a young journalist that analysis hadn't helped him. In fact, at one point Roth had wanted to end with two simple questions about psychoanalysis—"Is it true?" and "Does it work?"—but he was dissuaded. At another point, the show was to contain a "Contested Legacies" section, but this, too, was dropped. (The volume of essays which Roth edited to appear in conjunction with the show includes such a section, with contributions from those who come to bury Freud, not to praise him.)

Instead, the controversy has been accommodated by a visual device that wraps around the exhibit, consisting of a century's worth of quotes about the paterfamilias of the couch, some of them from people who saw psychoanalysis as no more than a ludicrous (not to mention lubricious) enterprise. There is J. M. Cattell's comment, in 1926, that "psychoanalysis is not so much a question of science as a matter of taste, Dr. Freud being an artist who lives in the fairyland of dreams among the ogres of perverted sex"; the notorious remark by Karl Kraus that "psychoanalysis is the malady which considers itself the remedy"; and the ire of seventies feminists such as Germaine Greer and Shulamith Firestone. But there are also clever tributes, like one from Jacques Lacan, who had the grace to throw his cultish following off the scent with the pronouncement "You can be Lacanians; as for me, I'm a Freudian." Unfortunately, the quotations are shrouded in semi-darkness, placed well above eye level, and painted in the palest of silvery hues. Is this merely a less-is-more design decision, or does it point to an unexamined tension on the part of the exhibit's creators? Cheryl Regan told me that the quotes are meant to function like a subtext—like "wallpaper"—only to concede that plans were under way to improve the lighting and to repaint the wording.

The other disappointment in the show is also a matter of visual presentation: if you're looking for a re-creation of the Old World Viennese gemütlichkeit that is part of the myth of Freud's study at Berggasse 19, you won't find it. What you'll see is something that Roth described, in a glibly hip phrase, as "a refusal of versimilitude": a stark, glass-enclosed room in which Freud's fountain pen, his spectacles and case, and sundry archeological talismans are laid out on a desk made of a material that reminded me of the blue Formica that was used in fifties "Ozzie and Harriet"-like kitchens. Those who long to inhale the aura of a gentler age are thrown a sop in the form of Freud's green velvet-covered psychoanalytic chair, the Persian rug and cushions from his consulting couch (draped over a form that consolingly suggests an actual couch), and an Edmund Engelman photograph of the study taken in 1938, right before Freud fled Vienna for London, in which one can make out a small mirror hung in a window overlooking the trees. The mirror adds a hint of mystery: did Freud, the consummate listener, need to check his reflection and remind himself that he, too, was there?



EVERYONE and no one wants to take credit for the Freud show: Harold Blum, the director of the Archives, who has an impresario's manner, announced within seconds of our being introduced that the exhibit was his idea, down to its name, and that he safeguarded it through the bad times. These claims were promptly scoffed at by others; one gauge of Freud's immense influence is suggested by the frantic scrambling to be the sole possessor of the keys to his kingdom. Still, without Blum's willingness to do the scut work and his decision to release as much of the archival material as possible (in contrast to the hoarding style of his predecessor, Kurt Eissler), the exhibit would never have happened. Despite his efforts, however, Blum confided that he would have done things a bit differently, implying that Roth was not the best choice. When the curator attended a lunch for the Archives board, in Madison Hall, he sat at Blum's table and was glacially ignored, as though he were an errant schoolboy who happened to have wandered into the headmaster's quarters. I sat at another table, between two ex-shrinks of mine—something of a demographic feat, no doubt, attesting either to my ceaseless pursuit of self-knowledge or to my crippling dependence on listeners for hire. (One of them was an older analyst whom I consulted several summers ago about my Adele H.-like attempts to win back a man I had consistently rejected; after I described my pleading phone calls and notes, he summarily advised me, in his mellifluous Hungarian accent, to "shtop the campaign.") The analysts at the table were planning to tour the exhibit after lunch, but what really got their adrenaline going was the prospect of attending an exclusive party at the Austrian Ambassador's private residence later in the day. Although David and Jill Scharff, the directors of the Object Relations Therapy Institute, had arranged a gala reception at the Austrian Embassy, this was deemed to be the less desirable of the two Saturday festivities—a configuration of A- and B-list parties which seemed more fitting to the Hamptons than to a serious professional gathering. The intense snobbery and fractiousness that mark what Freud himself called

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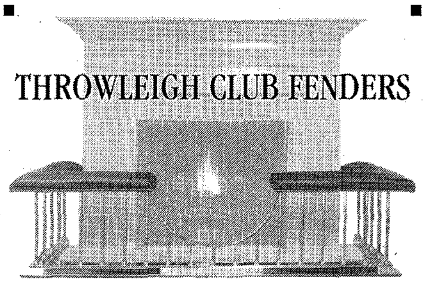

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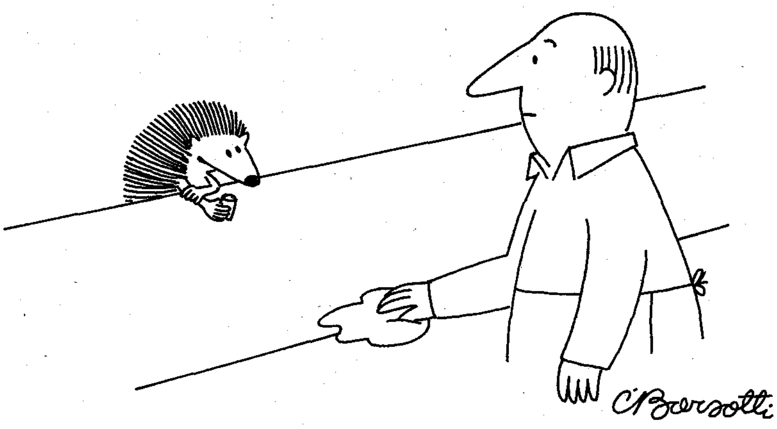

"They say, 'The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one great thing.' Want to hear it?"

• •

the impossible profession could strike one as comic if they weren't also pitiful. It was hard to find anyone who had anything positive to say about anyone else: one of Blum's own board members dismissed him as a "drone," while another raised a disparaging eyebrow at the mention of a speaker at the upcoming afternoon session of the conference. As for the Object Relations people, who are a relatively new and unhierarchical bunch, they weren't given so much as a passing nod by my lunch companions. Indeed, it became swiftly clear that this old-line group cast a suspicious eye on all comers, whether Roth or an analyst from an institute not creaking with prestige.

The pathos of the situation is not lost on George Gross, a past president of the venerable New York Psychoanalytic Institute, whom I had dinner with at a Chinese restaurant that evening. We talked about the exhibit (Gross, to his surprise, loved it) and about the fact that Freud "attracted a lot of nuts," in part because of his intellectual promiscuity: he fell in love with every new idea that came along, only to abandon it for the next. When I mentioned that many of Freud's acolytes seem more focussed on social standing than on intellectual exchange, Gross nodded. "Considering they've all been analyzed," he said, "you'd think they'd talk to each other."

THE proprietary pettiness of some of Freud's heirs stands in vivid contrast to the enduring influence of his ideas, which live on in an almost botanical variety of species. The study of object relations, which centers on how people relate to one another (what Jill Scharff sweetly describes as the wish "to be somebody's somebody") rather than on their instinctual conflicts, was until recently subsumed under the category of ego psychology. This approach, first developed in the twenties with Melanie Klein's theory that infants internalize a "good" and a "bad" breast, was honed and elaborated by D. W. Winnicott and other members of the British school. It moved away from Freud's emphasis on the fear of the father, as exemplified by the Oedipus complex and castration anxiety, to highlight the failings of the mother, which were understood to result in difficulties with adult attachments.

The latest conceptual buzzword, if one is to judge by what was said at the conference, is "intersubjectivity." It turns out that this refers to nothing more than the personal relationship between an analyst and his or her patient. At a Sunday-afternoon session entitled "Freud and Love," Stefan Pasternack, a clinical professor of psychiatry at Georgetown, discussed the problem of how best to respond to a patient who has declared his or her love for a therapist: can the therapist say "I love you" in return? His co-presenter, Curtis Bristol, had set the stage for these ruminations with a précis of Freud's own thoughts on the problem of romance, emphasizing the distinction he made between "aim-inhibited" familial love and erotic love (thereby suggesting, if only incidentally, the reason that so many marriages rapidly become sexually inert). Bristol reminded the audience that Freud's radical innovation was to point out that adult love begins in infancy, so that the finding of a love object "is, in fact, a re-finding of it." I felt a glow of satisfaction on hearing these words—it all sounded so eminently simple—only to find myself wondering why Freud's statement that "the biology of desire seeks an object of satisfaction" seems so much easier to understand than most of the couples I know. Even the omnipotent Dr. Freud was vulnerable to rejection: at a presentation the previous afternoon, one speaker had recounted the fate of those patients who were doomed to wander the earth as "analytic exiles"—not, it was asserted, because they were the "untreatable narcissists" that Freud declared them to be but because they didn't provide him with the transferential love he required!

The talk I'd most looked forward to—since Freud has been blisteringly skewered for his views on women—was Paula Ellman's "Psychoanalysis and the Riddle of Femininity." Ellman, who is a training analyst in the Washington branch of the New York Freudian Society, stepped up to the stage, put on her glasses, and rattled off her paper in a contained, schoolgirlish manner. Her findings were based on a study group of female psychoanalysts, and the air fairly bristled with daunting clinical terms like "somatic encapsulation" and "false phallic solution." There was a touching real-life patient at the heart of Ellman's presentation—referred to, in the characteristic mode of such narratives, as "Ms. A."—who had dreamed about degreasing a brisket with a turkey baster. (This was interpreted as an inauthentic style of femininity which she had borrowed from her mother.) I strained to keep an eye on Ms. A., thinking that her woes sounded not unfamiliar, but I kept losing her in the clutter of jargon. Just when I despaired of understanding what, exactly, distinguishes "primary femininity" from any other kind of femininity (though I gathered that it has something to do with "kinesthetic knowledge" of one's genitals), Ellman declared in her soft but insistent voice that "the penis itself is not involved with penis envy." For a moment, I felt as though I were living in a parody out of Woody Allen's "Without Feathers," in which a Kafkaesque narrator muses about a character who is referred to only by her initial. ("Should I marry W.? Not if she won't tell me the other letters in her name.") I looked across the aisle and noticed two women taking naps, and then down my own row, where a woman sat calmly doing embroidery. Her immersion in that age-old domestic activity made me think of Vermeer—and of a time before people reclined on couches and whined about their mothers. I am in no position to discount the ameliorative power of therapy, but after listening to two days of presentations I felt not only that the theories were vaguely interchangeable but that all of them began and ended in the black hole of maternal inattention. Mother, father: it hardly matters. What life was like before we came to believe that our difficulties in the present reside in a buried and traumatic past has become nearly impossible to imagine.

In the end, I wanted to get back to Freud himself, to regain the clarity and calm of the exhibit, but the Library of Congress was closed on Sunday, my last day in Washington. You might say I was suffering from separation anxiety, but I wished to spend more time with him—to look again at the photograph, taken by his friend and patron Princess Marie Bonaparte, of Freud contemplating a Javanese figure from his cherished archeological collection, in which he seems consumed by an interiority that borders on sadness, and to listen once more to the BBC recording of a statement he made less than a year before his death, in September of 1939, when his jaw cancer had advanced to an incurable state. He speaks in a heavily accented English, sounding both determined and in pain; even at this late date he was concerned with setting the record straight, so that his ideas would not be mangled after he was gone. (He continued to refine them up until the very end: only a month before he died, at the age of eighty-three, he was reworking the notion that intellectual inhibitions were linked to inhibitions about masturbation, positing in one of his final journal entries that there was something ungratifying in the very nature of orgasmic relief.)

There is no retrieving this great, flawed polymath from the mists of myth—including the myths that he perpetuated, such as not having read Nietzsche—but the show succeeds in bringing you into intimate dialogue with Freud's magnetic mind and personality. Roth's choice of historical material struck me as revelatory, beginning with the first item on display. This holographed document contains the tender inscription that Jacob Freud, Sigmund's father, wrote in the family Bible and dedicated to his adult son. The inscription is in Hebrew, which is of interest mostly because of Freud's later insistence that he had forgotten how to read the language. Was this "completely Godless Jew," as he once described himself, more connected to his heritage than he claimed? Although the issue of Freud's disaffected Jewishness has been vigorously taken up in the last decade—along with the whole question of the uneasy relationship between Judaism and psychoanalysis—I wonder how much it really matters, since he couldn't in any case escape the fate of his people.

In June of 1938, shortly after his daughter, Anna, was called in by the Gestapo, Freud and his family left Vienna. With the financial assistance of Bonaparte, Freud was able to pay the "refugee tax" demanded by the Nazis and to take his possessions with him; his study, library, and consulting room were re-created at 20 Maresfield Gardens, in London. One of the most poignant images in "Conflict and Culture" comes toward its close, where the tone of the exhibit—and of Freud's ruminations about the intractability of our aggressive impulses—darkens. It is a small black-and-white snapshot of four of his five sisters: Dolfi, Mitzi, Rosa, and Pauli. They look sympathetic, these elderly women who remained behind in Vienna after efforts to secure visas for them failed. (Dolfi died of starvation in Theresienstadt; the three others were murdered in death camps.) When Roth and I came to this part of the show, we both stared at the photo for a long moment. "They got the antiquities out, but not the sisters," he observed. Then, as if to explain something to himself, he added, "If anyone should have been able to anticipate that aggression has no limits . . ." He left the sentence dangling, and it was clear how deeply this polished curator in a well-cut suit had thought about the meaning of Freud's work. Given his distanced, slightly frisky spirit of inquiry, I could see why he rattled the people who sat on the board of the Archives; one of the more important trustees had gone as far as to call him "ambivalent." But if the protective fervor of Freud's custodians has helped to keep his legacy intact, it is the ambivalent energies of intellectual explorers like Michael Roth that will secure its future. ♦

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

SCOTT RITTER'S PRIVATE WAR

Saddam Hussein charged that the aggressive U.N. arms inspector Scott Ritter was a spy. C.I.A. polygraph experts had their own doubts about Ritter. How did one marine, operating by his own rules, make himself the architect and enforcer of the effort to uncover Saddam's secret weapons?

BY PETER J. BOYER

LIKE many in Washington, Scott Ritter spent the weeks of late summer and early fall publicly questioning the truthfulness of the President, but Ritter's complaints had nothing to do with sex. Ritter is the Marine Corps reserve major who in late August quit his job as a United Nations arms inspector to protest the Administration's unspoken shift in policy toward Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Ritter's assertion—and it has not been refuted—is that in the last year the United States has furtively retreated from its stated policy of ridding Iraq, under threat of force, of its capacity to develop and employ chemical weapons, biological weapons, and nuclear weapons.

Since his resignation, Ritter has been praised by supporters, in the media and in congressional hearings, as a modest herald of the square-jawed truth. He is in fact a great deal more: someone who saw himself as the instrument of a radically new concept in disarmament—peacekeeping as a different kind of warfare. Within the United Nations special commission charged with disarming Iraq, Ritter helped to form and operate what amounted to a discrete intelligence operation, applying tradecraft to a task whose tools had always been a pen and a clipboard. His operation was not bound by the usual protocols of national security or, for that matter, by U.N. precedent. In the national-security offices of the White House, Ritter was sometimes referred to as Darth Ritter, and though the Administration denied charges by Saddam that he was a spy, some people at the Central Intelligence Agency apparently were not so sure. Polygraph experts there raised the prospect, after running extensive tests, that Ritter might have been working for Israel—or, at least, that he had inappropriately handed American secrets to Israeli intelligence agents. The degree to which these suspicions may have influenced policy decisions in Washington, if at all, is not known.

What is known is that back in January, after Saddam had accused Ritter of being a spy and blocked his team from a key site, President Clinton brushed the accusation aside and dispatched ships and troops to the Persian Gulf. War seemed imminent. "We have the authority to use military force," Secretary of State Madeleine Albright warned, referring to Iraq's obligation, under U.N. Resolution 687, to allow free, unfettered weapons inspections. "We are prepared to go unilaterally."

Then, in February, the crisis suddenly passed; the U.N. Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, made an agreement with Iraq that allowed inspections to resume. But Clinton continued to talk tough. In April, he declared that the standoff had ended only because of American and international "resolve to both use military force and impose the severest consequences on Iraq for any further Iraqi transgressions."

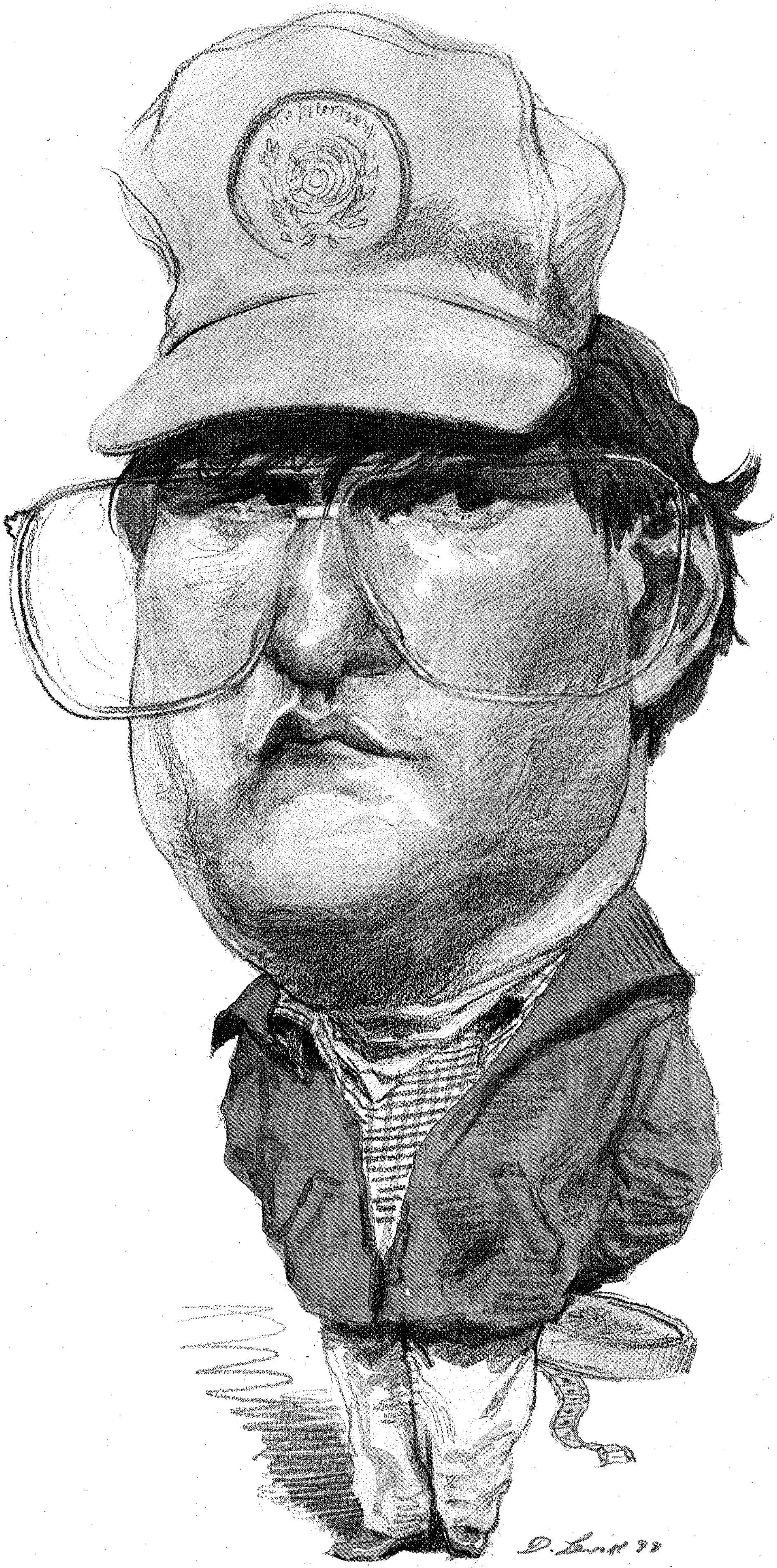
Despite the brawny posturing, Ritter and his fellow-inspectors began to suspect that American policy had secretly changed. On six occasions, plans for aggressive U.N. inspections in Iraq were judged too combative by the United States and were modified or cancelled. Ritter's suspicion was borne out when, in August, Saddam once again refused to allow inspectors to carry out their task. This time, the United States hardly bothered to protest. Ritter, in a widely publicized letter of resignation, declared, "The illusion of arms control is more dangerous than no arms control at all."

Ritter's gesture struck a chord. Such individual moral certainty seemed almost startlingly out of time at a moment when Washington was focus-grouping the fate of a Presidency and the White House was opinion-polling contrition posture. Ritter now finds himself becoming a celebrity. Although he has no job (as his wife, Marina, has reminded him), he has a lecture agent, and his literary agent is entertaining offers for a book contract. Limousines pick him up for network morning news shows. The Washington *Post* published a series of articles, by Barton Gellman, focussing on Ritter's activities in Iraq, and last month he was flown to Aspen for the annual Forstmann Little & Company retreat, where Colin Powell, Sam Nunn, Henry Kissinger, and others took turns anointing him a "great American."

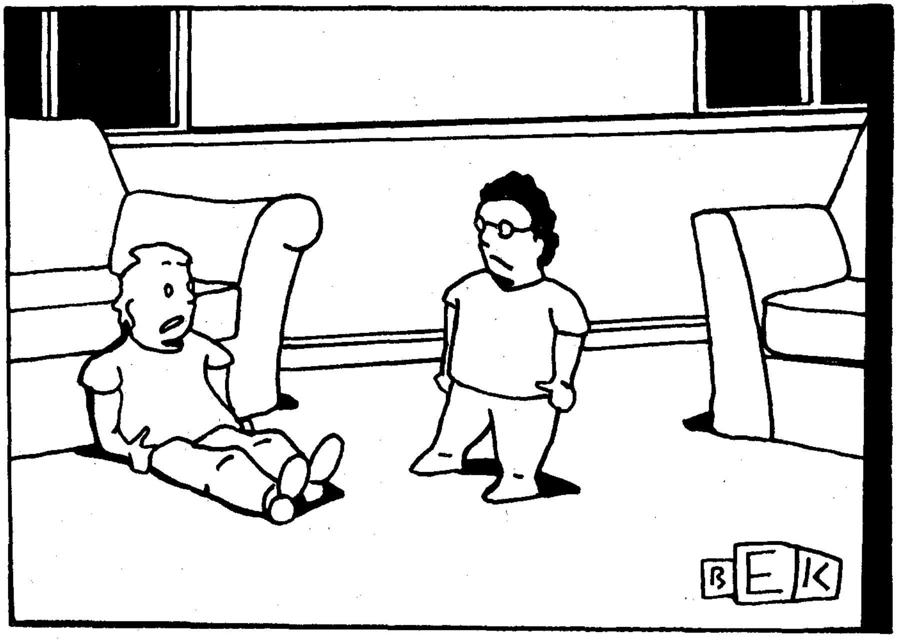
Just after Ritter resigned, he agreed to be interviewed for this account. We met several times during the following weeks, mostly in the modest home in the Westchester County village of Hastings-on-Hudson where he lives with Marina, their twin daughters, and his in-laws. Ritter is a big man (six feet four, two hundred and ten pounds), and is polite in a military manner. His eyeglasses and easy smile suggest an ingenuousness that is more than balanced by an intensity that lies just beneath the surface. The intensity flares when conversation turns to his strained relationship with his government, which he insists has less to do with his own deeds than with the Administration's policy muddle regarding Iraq. "It's not a Scott Ritter issue," he says.

Perhaps, but it is certainly true that Ritter came to embody this country's

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID LEVINE



Ritter on inspection protocol: "I am the alpha dog. I'm going in tail high. Gonna spray urine all over their walls."



"Why are they always pushing quality on us?"

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hard-line policy toward Saddam's weapons programs, and that Washington grew wary of the policy and of the man at once. By dint of his extraordinary resourcefulness, fervor, and willingness to stretch the rules, Ritter came to play a role that was, as Senator Joseph Biden sarcastically told him, "above your pay grade." The war that this country almost found itself plunging into at the beginning of the year was, to some real degree, Scott Ritter's war. By the time the Administration backed off, America's Iraq policy had become no policy at all.

I. RIGHTEOUS ZEAL

THE Gulf War did not end on a battlefield in Iraq. It ended in New York, at the United Nations Building, with the passage, in April of 1991, of Resolution 687, which allowed Saddam Hussein to remain in power, still heading an Army and a host of élite security forces. In exchange, the economic sanctions that the U.N. had imposed on Iraq before the Gulf War would largely stay in place, insuring that Saddam could not raise money for new militaristic ventures by selling oil abroad. In addition, Saddam agreed to accept the destruction of Iraq's long-range missiles and of its nuclear, biological, and chemical arsenals, and to allow all facilities involved in the research and development of these weapons to be rendered harmless. A special U.N. commission—UNSCOM—was created to conduct the disarmament.

Although Iraq filed a disclosure report on its missile program within a few weeks of signing the U.N. resolution, this was revealed, over the next five years, to be mostly a fiction. Iraq vowed that it had no interest in germ warfare, but it has turned out that the country developed a pharmacopoeia's worth of killer biology. In addition to a microorganism called *Clostridium perfringens*, which causes gas gangrene (Iraq had produced ninety gallons of the stuff), Saddam's forces also had more than two thousand gallons of anthrax (enough to kill millions); 5,125 gallons of botulinum toxin, a biological poison that paralyzes and strangles its victims (enough to kill the world's population several times over); and 2.7 gallons of ricin, a pesticide that causes death in humans within two days. And that is just the biological arsenal that Baghdad finally admitted to; UNSCOM suspects there is much more still hidden.

As for its chemical-warfare arsenal, Iraq reluctantly admitted that it had produced VX, the nerve gas infamous for its lethality—one drop kills—and had amassed four hundred metric tons of the chemicals needed to make it. Iraq also admitted producing between a hundred and a hundred and fifty metric tons of sarin gas, which causes spasmic frenzy and then death, and five hundred metric tons of mustard gas.

Iraq steadfastly claimed that it had never had a nuclear program, or any ambition to develop one. Rolf Ekeus, UNSCOM's first executive chairman, says, "We soon detected that the nuclear file was a complete falsification." Iraq's nuclear program is now believed to be lacking only highly enriched uranium in order to detonate a twenty-kiloton bomb.

In September of 1991, a high-level Iraqi defector confirmed what was already becoming apparent to the disarmament team: Iraq had a vast program of illegal-weapons development, the documentation and components of which were hidden throughout the country. "I would say it was the equivalent to war, in arms control," Ekeus says. "They were really not only denying but aggressively blocking and misleading and using all the tricks in the book to thwart us."

It was obvious that if UNSCOM was going to succeed it would have to do more than try to verify passively that Iraqi declarations were provably untrue. In a noteworthy philosophical departure for the U.N., UNSCOM decided that if Iraq was going to wage the arms-control equivalent of war UNSCOM would do the same. A new tactic was conceived: the "inspection of discovery," whereby an UNSCOM team would conduct inspections, often by surprise, at sites of its own choosing. This was an inherently confrontational approach, and—depending, as it did, upon logistics and intelligence—it was more like a military mission than like a traditional arms-verification exercise. An UNSCOM official suggested the recruitment of someone perfectly suited to the arms-control equivalent of war—a Marine Corps captain he'd known in Russia. One senior American official, looking back, says, "If there wasn't a Ritter, he'd have to be invented."

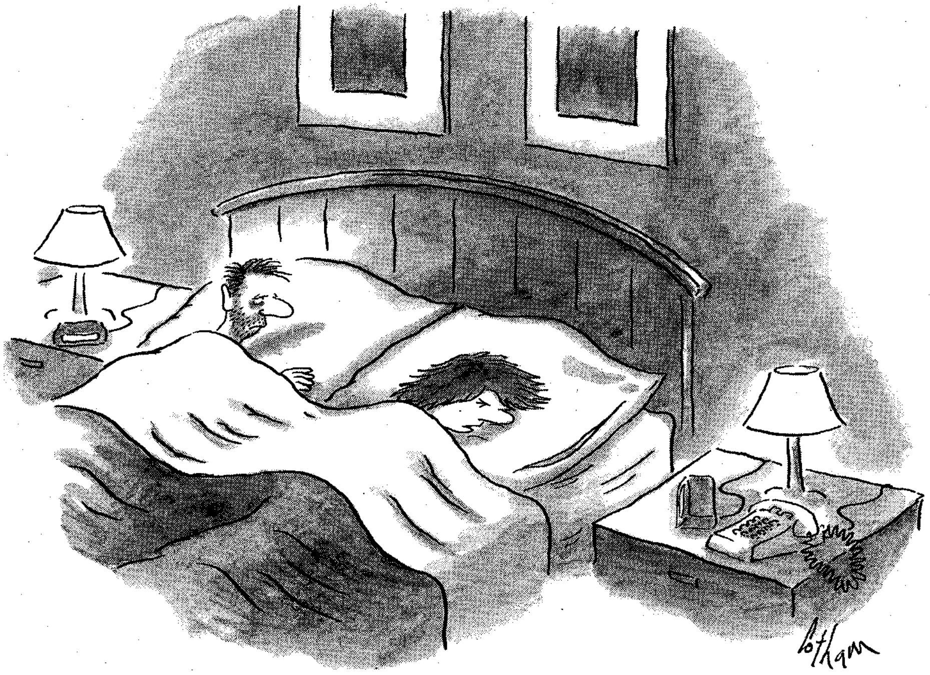
THE quality that Scott Ritter brought to UNSCOM, in the early autumn of 1991, was righteous zeal. It was his defining characteristic, and always had been. Ritter was born in 1961, at the tail end of the baby boom, but he and three sisters managed to pass through adolescence nearly oblivious of the convulsions of the youth culture that shaped their generation. Theirs was a military family, which for the children meant a life of relocation, sudden midterm transfers into and out of schools with names like Chester Nimitz Elementary and George C. Marshall High. William Scott Ritter, Sr., was an Air Force mechanic who went back to school to get an officer's commission. He married an Air Force nurse, Patricia Folkmire, and they reared their family on military bases from Florida to Hawaii to Ankara. It was a life with its own cadence and rhythms—a culture apart from the civilian America that was noisily remaking itself beyond the gates of the base. When Scott's older sister, Shirley, attended Brown, in the nineteen-seventies, she was nonplussed after a friend asked her whether she had ever participated in the antiwar movement. "I had no idea about the peace movement," she recalls. "We just knew that our friends' dads were going to war."

As a boy, Scott showed a talent for drawing and design, enough to encourage his mother's hope that he might become an artist. The thought repelled him. "He wanted to go into the military ever since I can remember," his father says. "He was very red-white-and-blue." Scott's sisters knew that if they really wanted to annoy their brother they could move the pieces of his carefully assembled toy-soldier battlefields, whose tiny infantrymen and cannons he spent hours deploying. Scott devoured history, especially the great military campaigns, and, even within the context of a military family, his obsessiveness seemed a little weird. "I was worried about that, to be honest with you," the senior Ritter recalls. Many of the men Scott knew—his father and his father's friends and colleagues—were attached to NATO, and Scott fashioned himself as a fierce junior Cold Warrior. He would talk of growing up to kill Russians, and when he embraced the jokey phrase "Kill a Commie for Mommy" it was not for its irony.

He was an indifferent student, but the United States Military Academy, at West Point, ran a prep school in New Jersey that offered a yearlong program of intensive study designed to help promising students reach the admissions standards. The price of the school was a service commitment to the Army. In 1979, Ritter jumped at it, signing a six-year enlistment obligation. "We ran a pretty tough program," says Colonel Calvin DeWitt (Ret.), who was the commandant of the school when Ritter attended it. Scott adapted to barracks life at the school, but by the end of the year he had second thoughts about West Point: It wasn't gung-ho enough for him. At the basic camp required by the prep school, Scott had met a young marine, a Semper Fi eulogist, who spoke of the corps in rhapsodic language derived from "The Sands of Iwo Jima." Despite the six-year commitment to the Army, Scott, in a youthful display of the persuasive power that would shape his professional life, managed to talk his way into an "honorable discharge for the good of the service" by promising Colonel DeWitt that he would become a Marine officer.

In the winter of 1981, Scott enrolled at Franklin and Marshall College, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, much to the relief of his father. The senior Ritter thought that life on a civilian campus would temper Scott's fixation on the military—a career choice he considered beneath his son's potential. But on the Lancaster campus, which didn't even have an R.O.T.C. program, Scott's military identity blossomed. A classmate named Bob Murphy recalls returning to school from Christmas break and seeing Ritter for the first time—a huge figure with a military haircut, curled on his dorm-room floor counting off a thousand situps. Ritter had enrolled in a summer Marine officer-training program. On the campus, he was called Sarge, and he played on the Franklin and Marshall football team. He wasn't as talented as he was enthusiastic—voluntarily running extra wind sprints at practice—and he was made captain of the special-teams unit, also known in football as the "suicide squad," for the head-on abandon required of its participants. Ritter studied Russian history and language ("Russia's a threat, so I want to study 'em," he told his parents. "Gotta know your enemy") and became his department's honors student. After graduation, he married his college sweetheart, Heidi Evans, and headed for the corps.

As a newly commissioned second lieutenant in 1984, Ritter was a marine in a hurry. At the basic-training school, in Quantico, Virginia, new officers are given pep talks by representatives of the service's various specialties—artillery, logistics, and so on—and are asked to select a field of concentration. Toward the end of the presentation to Ritter's class, the officer from Marine intelligence told the young men that an intelligence officer had to understand each of the disciplines, and Ritter decided that he'd found his calling. The standard route to intelligence required candidates to first complete a three-year tour learning to command a combat platoon. But Ritter had no patience for standard procedure. He wrote directly to the commandant



"Not tonight—I have the legal definition of a headache."

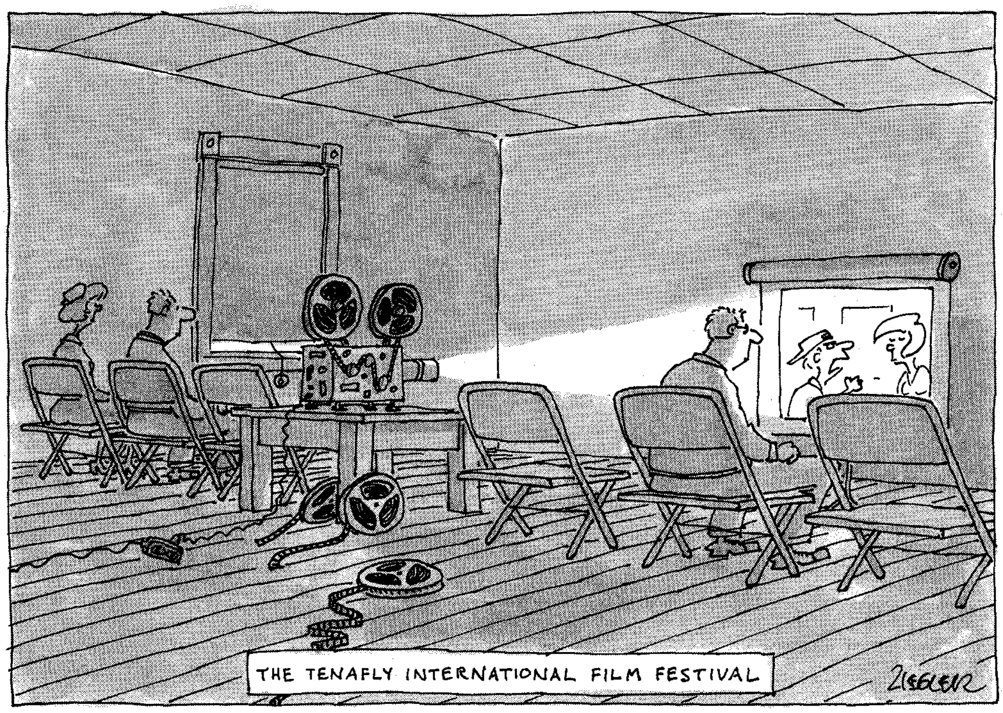
of the Marine Corps telling him that the corps was wasting a valuable intelligence asset by keeping Second Lieutenant Scott Ritter from his calling. "I speak Russian," Ritter recalls writing, "and I want to be an intelligence officer. That's what I want to do for the Marine Corps and I think it would be a waste of your time to put me through combat-officer training just so I can be an intelligence officer. I need to start now." Somehow, Ritter's request was granted: he was dispatched to Twenty-nine Palms, California, where he became the 7th Marine Amphibious Brigade's junior intelligence officer.

Ritter's superiors there gave him some books, pointed the way to the brigade's various units, and told him to go forth and become an intelligence officer. His captain, Dan Button, gave him one piece of advice: Learn to think "outside the box." It turned out that thinking outside the box was Ritter's default mode. The command staff had never seen anything like it from any junior officer. "Since his arrival . . . Lt. Ritter has shown non-stop initiative and desire," an early report from one of Ritter's superiors read. "His unbridled desire to learn and contribute . . . was exceeded only by his positive 'can-do' attitude." Before long, he was editing and producing the brigade's weekly intelligence summary. By the time the Marine Corps got around to sending Ritter to intelligence school, in 1986, he had been awarded the Navy Achievement medal.

As Ritter was promoted through the ranks, he would perform his assigned tasks reliably and then dream up new projects and go off on his own. Occasionally, this tendency to independence caused problems, as when he contrived a plan to create a sort of spymobile for his unit. With the help of a staff sergeant, Ritter acquired a receiver, radios, and other gizmos from a Defense Logistics Agency warehouse in the California desert and transformed a standard-issue Humvee, with guidance from the vehicle's manufacturer, into an intelligence-downloading unit on wheels. When it came to light that Ritter had broken various laws and regulations (including a ban on direct contact with a defense contractor), he was chided by his superiors, but only gently. Ritter's bosses found the young officer's ingenuity impressive, and his fitness reports—a marine's equivalent of a report card—were unfailingly glowing. In January of 1988, just two years out of intelligence school, Ritter got the job of his dreams—a ticket to Russia.

THE Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty, signed by Ronald Reagan in 1987, called for reductions in United States and Soviet arsenals of certain missiles, and led to the creation of the On-Site Inspection Agency (O.S.I.A.), a creature of the Department of Defense, to monitor the reductions. The agency allotted positions to each of the military branches, and Ritter—his candidacy no doubt enhanced by his background in Russian—was selected for one of the Marine slots, becoming the only lieutenant among a collection of majors and colonels. Before he got out of Washington, though, he was halted in the hallway at the agency's headquarters by a Marine colonel, who, Ritter recalls, began barking at him in a foreign language. Ritter scarcely understood a word of what he was saying, which was not good, because the colonel was the agency's Russian-language expert. The colonel declared Ritter's "fluency" in Russian a fraud, and kicked him off the team. But Ritter didn't give up. Having persuaded the officer in charge of monitoring missiles of the need for a counter-intelligence program, he found himself named the team's counter-intelligence officer.

So Ritter got to Votkinsk, a closed city in the heart of Russia, up against the foothills of the Urals. At the Votkinsk Machine Building Plant, Soviet technicians had formerly assembled SS-20s, intermediate-range nuclear missiles now banned by the treaty, and were continuing to assemble SS-25s, a type of ICBM. On paper, Ritter had a mundane monitoring job, but his secret task, the source of his enthusiasm, was intelligence. In this capacity, Ritter decided that his first mission was to figure out how, exactly, the Soviets were monitoring his teams. This was a challenge for a novice American spy in a closed Soviet city—especially for one trying to get by with his limited Russian. "So I hang around Votkinsk and just observe," he recalls. "O.K., we're at the hotel. What kind of people live at this hotel? Not too many people but Americans. But what about that guy who keeps going up to the fifth floor with the big briefcase? Well, I'm going to write that down and see what he does. And he has a friend—they meet. Well, I saw that guy downtown. He was over here with another guy. What kind of car does he drive? What's the license plate of the car? And you start putting it together and suddenly you realize there's a surveillance mechanism out there watching what you do. What I basically


THE TENAFLY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
ZIEGLER

did was start putting together a picture of how the Russians monitored us."

Ritter also discovered that the Russian escorts—university girls, who spoke flawless English—reported every conversation directly to the plant's First Department, a security unit associated with the K.G.B. The young women were attractive and intelligent, which to Ritter meant only one thing. "I wrote a report for the C.I.A.," he recalls. "I said, 'Look, we've got a problem here. These girls are so smart, they speak English so well, and they interact with Americans so effectively that they have to be spies.'" It was an assessment that Ritter one day had reason to regret, but for the moment his characteristic self-certainty ruled.

Ritter found himself bridling against the O.S.I.A. chief, Army General Roland Lajoie, who insisted that Ritter limit his efforts to the passive collection of information. Ritter was disappointed. "I had put in a whole bunch of aggressive plans on how to really rape the Russians, in terms of intelligence," he recalls. "Like building a desk that really is a radio antenna. I actually designed it, and had a plan on getting it in, but Lajoie said no." Even constrained, Ritter was able to produce results. Ritter suspected that the facility was developing follow-on missiles to the SS-20 and the SS-25, which he believed the Russians were slipping past the inspectors. Devising an elaborate surveillance formula, derived from observing railcars that were used to bring parts into the plant and to transport completed missiles out, he was able to demonstrate his assertion. Such work—which in many respects prefigured his subsequent efforts in Iraq—won him notice in the intelligence community, and an invitation to a counter-intelligence conference at which his voluminous reports out of Votkinsk were roundly praised. His biggest reward was one that he was allowed to see but not to keep—a letter of commendation from the director of the C.I.A.

In 1990, after two years with O.S.I.A., Ritter became concerned about his marriage, which had suffered from his extended absence, and asked for some time to repair things at home. In September, he submitted his resignation to the Marine Corps. But that summer Saddam Hussein had invaded Kuwait, and to a marine, as Ritter puts it, "war is a good thing." He wrote another letter to the Marine Corps asking it to put a hold on his resignation, and the corps, building for war, agreed.

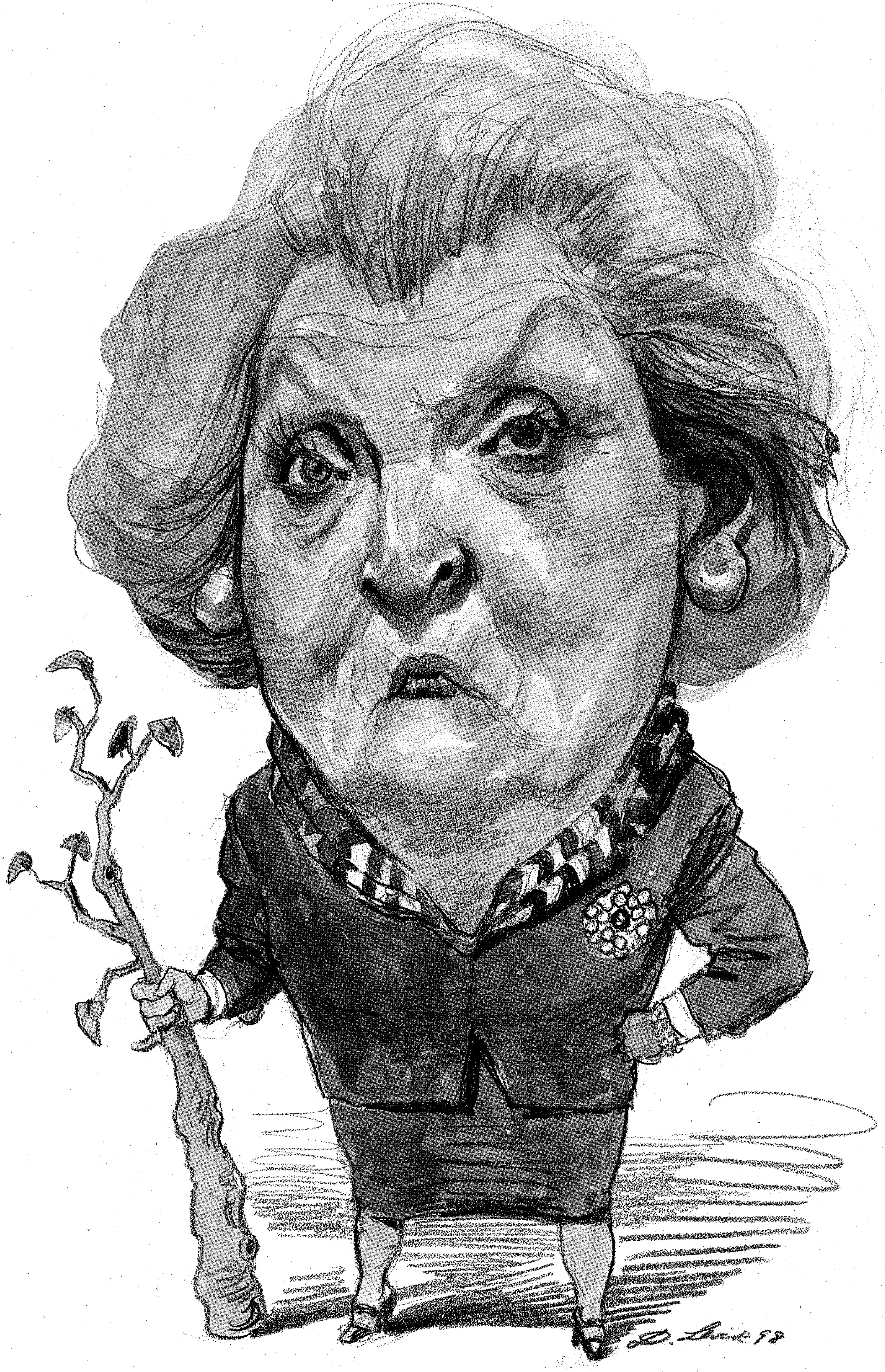
DESERT STORM was the perfect test for Ritter's "outside the box" orientation, and he landed in the perfect spot to demonstrate it. He was assigned to Central Command Headquarters, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he was placed in the battle-damage-assessment unit, charged with the task of measuring the damage that coalition forces were inflicting upon Iraq's war machine. Mostly, that meant hunting for Scuds. If Iraq's Scud missiles hurtling toward Tel Aviv succeeded in drawing Israel into the war, Arab support for the coalition would be seriously weakened. For the coalition command, the finding and destroying of Scud-missile launchers became an important task, and one that seemed achievable.

Ritter felt otherwise. He had become familiar with mobile missiles in Russia, and knew that their portability made them difficult, if not impossible, targets. As reports came in from coalition fighter pilots claiming a mounting record of Scud "kills," he was skeptical, and he began writing analysis reports asserting that the bombing raids couldn't be destroying as many Scud launchers as had been claimed, if any were being destroyed at all. "The fact was that Iraq had only a limited number of Scud launchers," Ritter recalls, "and we'd already killed four times more Scud launchers than they had, and they were still firing missiles." Ritter theorized that the Iraqis were sending decoy Scud launchers into the field, and that the decoys were absorbing tons of coalition matériel. He wrote report after report saying so, but General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the coalition's commander-in-chief, needed to show that the Scud problem was being handled, and he had videotape from F-15 gun cameras that seemed to prove it. On January 30, 1991, Schwarzkopf held a press conference and played a tape of a Scud raid for a worldwide television audience, saying, "We knocked out as many as seven mobile erector-launchers in just that one strike."

The next morning, when Ritter was filling out the battle-damage report and came to the section for confirmed kills, he wrote "Zero." His superiors reminded him that Schwarzkopf had just announced seven Scud hits. "And I said, 'Well, the General's wrong,'" Ritter recollects. "They said, 'Who the hell are you to tell the General that he's wrong?' I said, 'I'm the battle-damage-assessment officer, and I'm telling you that there aren't seven kills, and I'm not going to falsify a report.'" A panel of military analysts was assembled to settle the dispute. Not surprisingly, they decided for the General and against the Captain, and Ritter's tenure as battle-damage-assessment officer effectively ended.

Nevertheless, Ritter held to his theory that Scuds weren't being hit and, characteristically, he devised a bold scheme to test it. In Saudi Arabia, he had met some members of the Delta Force team—the élite American special-operations squad. When they didn't scoff at his idea that there were decoy Scud launchers in the desert, he told them his plan: a small force could slip into Iraq under cover of darkness, carve up a so-called Scud launcher with a power saw, and slip it back into Saudi Arabia. Then, if it was a decoy, the launcher could be shipped to the United States, and there its dimensions could be measured and a computerized profile could be programmed into allied radar, allowing bombers to recognize fake Scud launchers. The Delta Force team members considered Ritter's plan and told him to forget the power saw—they could lift the whole launcher with a helicopter.

With the plan now in place, Ritter flew out to the Delta Force's staging base, near the Iraqi border. But just before the mission was launched an emissary from command headquarters arrived and said that Ritter was under orders to return to Riyadh immediately. "Schwarzkopf had me detained," Ritter says. "He sent word down that 'Ritter is a defeatist. We're killing Scuds, and he's down there spreading bad juju with the boys. Put him in isolation. He can't talk to any of these people. Get him on the first airplane out of there, back to Riyadh. That's it. No more contact with Ritter.'" Schwarzkopf denies that he had any conflict with Ritter and says that he didn't know Ritter by name at the time. Ritter's theory about the Scuds eventually proved to be correct. (Schwarzkopf's



"We have the authority to use military force," Madeleine Albright declared. But she wouldn't go to war over Scott Ritter.

"launchers" were decoys and Jordanian oil tankers.) But, Ritter says, "I spent the rest of the war watching the ground war unfold—watching Scuds still landing on Israel, watching Scuds still hitting Saudi Arabia. Very frustrating."

II. ALPHA DOG

RITTER'S dustup with the hero-general of Desert Storm was obviously not a good career move, and he was convinced that his earlier letter of resignation had hurt his chances for advancement as well. And so, after the war, he left the Marine Corps, and in the summer of 1991 he was plotting his uncertain future. While Ritter was considering a job offer from H. J. Heinz, which wanted to open a food-processing plant in the Caucasus, he got a call from Doug Englund, his supervisor from the Votkinsk days, offering him a chance to return to the Middle East.

Englund was a former Army colonel who had been in charge of the monitoring teams in Votkinsk, and now he was the operations officer at UNSCOM. Ritter found Englund's offer—a chance to help rid Saddam Hussein of his deadly arsenals—enormously appealing. He saw it as a mission of thrilling absolutes: Saddam was the villain, the UNSCOM inspectors were the heroes, and if Iraq tried to stop them it would get hammered by a wrathful world, whose military might (led by American warships and planes) was ever at the ready. "It's the purity of the mission," Ritter says. "That's one of the things that made this so attractive. It's so black-and-white."

In hiring Ritter, UNSCOM confirmed its commitment to the arms-control "equivalent to war," as Ekeus, its former chairman, calls it, and took a long first step toward creating something that the United Nations had never before attempted—its own intelligence operation. This was an extremely difficult course, full of serious diplomatic risk. For good reason, the United Nations had never got involved in intelligence gathering: the U.N. depends for its resources upon member nations that have competing national interests. Israel, which is within a Scud-launch of Iraq, and Russia, which, because of the imposition of sanctions, hasn't been able to collect the billions it loaned Iraq, have each helped UNSCOM, but toward distinctly different ends. The United States energetically supported UNSCOM—indeed, helped to direct it, to a considerable degree—but the country had to protect its own intelligence secrets and also avoid appearing to make UNSCOM nothing more than an American cover operation. Intelligence is such a foreign concept to the U.N. culture that the word is not even spoken. "Information" is the preferred term for the commodity in which UNSCOM had now begun to trade.

The diplomatic difficulties inherent in mixing arms control with intelligence gathering became apparent early. In the summer of 1991, United States aerial imagery had helped lead to the discovery of Iraq's nuclear program, and Ekeus knew that such information could be critical to UNSCOM's mission. What he wanted was the sort of information that can be obtained by a U-2 spy plane. Only the United States has the U-2, and that fact posed two problems. One was that every U-2 photograph is classified as an American secret; the other problem was a sensitivity inside the Security Council to American influence over UNSCOM's activities. Ekeus's solution was to get the United States to "lend" UNSCOM a U-2 plane, technically making it a piece of U.N. equipment while maintaining American control over the actual operation of the craft and over the image development, thus protecting American secrets (the photographs).

No one really knew who should direct a U.N. intelligence unit. Initially, UNSCOM's intelligence activities were supervised by a special multinational task force that had been created in Washington after the defection of the high-level Iraqi, in September. According to Ritter, who had joined a special UNSCOM team called the Information Assessment Unit—"U.N.-ese for intelligence unit," as Ritter puts it—the Washington group took charge. "The United States would come in and they'd say, 'Here's the target, here's the people you need to use, here's the kind of expertise you need, we recommend you have this many nationalities, you'll use helicopters this day, drive this day,' " Ritter recalls. "And UNSCOM just sort of grabbed the folder and said, 'Oh, O.K.' And, basically, we were the tool of the United States." (Ekeus vehemently disputes this account of UNSCOM's origins, as he must—in his view, UNSCOM was always an independent entity.)

Ritter bristled at what he perceived as the U.N.'s subservience, and he lobbied Ekeus and Englund for more independence. He finally won that independence, Ritter believes, because he won the trust of Rolf Ekeus. "Once I established my credibility and credentials with Rolf, anything I wanted to do I got to do," Ritter says. "Anything."

What Ritter wanted first was more control over the U-2 operation. He wanted to have a say in directing it—"tasking" the plane, as the parlance had it—which had been one of his chores during the Gulf War. "It is meant to be the U.N.'s aircraft," Roger Hill, an Australian commando who worked with Ritter at UNSCOM, says. "So we should be directing its activities and targeting that aircraft in areas where we, the U.N., want to target it." In time, Ritter and his team did get greater responsibility for the U-2 missions, and gradually they gained more latitude in other areas.

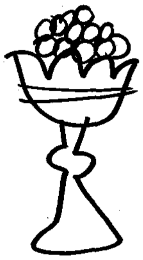
The UNSCOM teams drafted specialists from around the world for their inspections. Over time, the team Ritter worked with included linguists, who could interpret documents; commandos, who specialized in rapid assessment; computer enhancers, who could resurrect deleted files from Iraqi hard drives; and even a specialist who was so adept at opening locked security boxes and doors he was given the nickname Frankie the Felon. On one occasion, when the team was told by the Iraqis that a locked door could not be opened, because no one had the key, Frankie took out his tools and produced a key on the spot, then offered to give it to his hosts.

Nevertheless, disarming Iraq became an exquisitely frustrating cat-and-mouse game, which inevitably worked in favor of Iraq's strategy of outlasting the world's will to continue economic sanctions. Ritter believed that UNSCOM had to have some new advantage, and it struck him that the likeliest sources of useful information about Saddam were Saddam's most practiced enemies, Israel and Iran. In 1992, Ritter says, he asked Ekeus's permission to make contact with those two governments, and at first Ekeus said no. By the spring of 1994, though, Ekeus had made contact, through another channel, with Israel's military-intelligence service, Aman, and soon a stream of new information was flowing to Ritter and to Nikita Smidovich, a Russian former arms negotiator who had become Ritter's superior and partner at UNSCOM.

But then, just as Ritter began to glimpse the prospect of victory, there arose a complication of the most unexpected sort—one that would undermine his effectiveness, eventually to a crippling degree. His own government had begun to suspect that he was a spy.

By the time Ritter began dealing directly with the Israelis, in September of 1994, he was back on the payroll of the Marine Corps, detailed to UNSCOM. He had returned to the Marines in March, partly as a means of regaining his United States-government security clearance, which he had surrendered when he left the corps in 1991. But he eventually learned that he would not get a security clearance, and that was no small impediment for an intelligence officer. Ritter was angered by the denial—he felt he had been promised the clearance—but he should not have been surprised. He had set the trap for himself, in Russia.

By the end of his stay in Votkinsk, Ritter had decided that he'd been wrong about the young female translators whom he had reported to be spies. As he spent more time with them, he came to see them as guileless souls who were being used by the K.G.B. Later, when he heard that the women were on a C.I.A. list of suspected K.G.B. agents, he tried to persuade the agency to take their names off, but to no avail.



Ritter had developed a friendship with one of the young women, Marina Khatiashvili, of whom he says, "She is the smartest woman I ever met in my life." She was beautiful, too—a pale, dark-eyed Georgian, whose English was impeccable. Ritter insists that there was no romance between him and Marina in Votkinsk, but he could hardly claim otherwise. American policy strictly forbade fraternization by Americans with Russians; indeed, inspectors were obliged to adhere to a "two-man rule," which prohibited anyone from venturing around Votkinsk alone. Ritter often obtained permission to ignore it—a fact that did not go unnoticed by an F.B.I. agent who visited the Votkinsk operation on a routine security check. The agent, Robert Sligh, sent a memorandum to Washington noting that Ritter had inappropriate contact with Russians. Ritter protested the memorandum, and so did his superiors, whose fitness reports on his performance contained the usual high praise. But the seed had been planted and a Ritter file begun. Just before leaving the Marines in 1991, Ritter mentioned to an acquaintance in the F.B.I. that he intended to return to Russia after he left the corps. He mentioned, too, that his marriage to Heidi had ended, and he implied that part of the reason for his return might be to court Marina Khatiashvili. The agent warned Ritter, "Be careful." But Ritter figured that he was leaving the Marines, and that what he did as a civilian was nobody's business but his own.

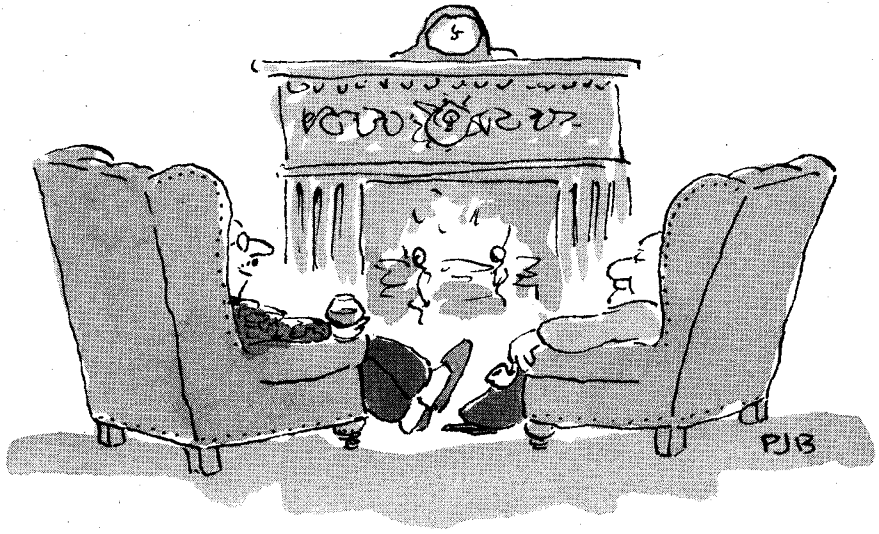
Marina says that she took the job of translator-escort in Votkinsk because it seemed exciting—she'd get to meet Americans. And, as Marina tells it, when she arrived in Votkinsk the First Department, the factory's security arm, told the new translators that they were expected to file a report after every contact with an American; later, some of the escorts, including Marina, were offered the chance to undertake more active intelligence work, for the K.G.B., for money. Marina says she refused the offer. Instead, she returned to Georgia, where she became an English professor at a university.

That is where she was in June, 1991, when Scott Ritter arrived. At that point, Ritter had just completed service in the Gulf War, and was a civilian. His interest in Marina was obvious, and she agreed to his proposal that she visit the United States with him that summer, to meet his parents. In July, she and Scott went to New Mexico, where Ritter's parents were then living. In August, they were married.

Only later did Ritter begin to discover the degree to which his government questioned its faith in him. At some point after he left Votkinsk, the O.S.I.A. disassembled the counterintelligence program he had erected there. "They did away with it after I left, because I married Marina," Ritter says. "Immediately, they went into a defensive mode, saying, 'Well, hell, here's this guy sitting there with all his reports, and now he marries this Russian. The Russians must have had him the whole time.' " Ritter's view is that what really annoyed people in the intelligence establishment was that he had operated beyond their ken, and that made them nervous. "I was a cowboy," he says. "And when I left they killed the cowboy."

In April, 1995, the Office of Naval Intelligence informed Ritter that his marriage to Marina Khatiashvili posed "an unacceptable risk," which disqualified him from holding a security clearance. "The fact that this relationship developed despite strong cautions creates serious doubt about your dependability and trustworthiness," a Defense Investigative Service report said. Ritter strenuously objected, to no avail. Without security clearances Ritter could no longer be an intelligence officer, although he was welcome to remain with the Marines. The corps suggested a career in logistics. "I said, 'That's not gonna happen, that's disgrace,' " Ritter recalls. "I'm not going to allow the Marine Corps that I love to disgrace me like this." Soon after, Ritter resigned from the corps a second time.

Meanwhile, at the U.N., he had turned all his energies to exploiting the link to Israeli intelligence that Rolf Ekeus had created—a course that would, for the first time, give UNSCOM the advantage. Israel's first small gift of intelligence was a transforming one—a key that opened the door to a secret Iraq, which Ritter and UNSCOM hadn't even known existed. The Israelis hinted that UNSCOM should pay attention to something called the Special Security Organization, part of a coterie of intensely loyal and reflexively obedient forces that made up Saddam Hussein's personal security structure. At first, Ritter had no notion what to make of the information. He had always likened intelligence analysis to the process of writing, a task of making a coherent story of disordered facts, but what was the story of the S.S.O.? How did it relate to other units, the Special Republican Guards and the Special Presidential Guards? Ritter went home, turned down the lights, and sat alone in a room with his notes until the story came to him: Saddam's personal guards, trusted experts in the brute efficiencies of survival, had the dual mission of protecting Saddam and hiding Iraq's arsenal from UNSCOM.



"I'm not worrying. I've got most of my money in handbaskets."

• •

UNSCOM eventually identified what came to be known as Iraq's "concealment mechanism"—clunky jargon for what was in fact a brilliantly executed game of hide-and-seek. UNSCOM was failing to find Iraq's vast array of weapons and components because they were always on the move. The special security forces, directed by Saddam's son and his personal secretary, ran this game of large-scale prestidigitation, commanding a fleet of Mercedes trucks via a coded system of communications. More than once, the trucks and their illicit cargo—coolers of deadly germs, components of nuclear weapons, reinforcement rings for missile warheads, and the like—slipped away from a storage site's rear exit as an UNSCOM team approached the front gate. "I said, 'Well, these are the guys who are hiding stuff,'" Ritter recalls. "'We need to start going after them.'"

The discovery of the concealment mechanism inspired new tactics: UNSCOM didn't have to find buried Scuds scattered somewhere beneath the desert sands; it had only to discover proof of Iraq's secret plan to retain its weapons program. That evidence would insure that the international community would continue to support UNSCOM's inspections and keep up the economic sanctions against Iraq. The new tactics meant a heightened emphasis on intelligence, and to Ritter, who directed the concealment-mechanism team, that meant going to Israel. "This was a new kind of warfare that we're fighting," Ritter says. "And I equated it with counter-terrorism. . . . And the best counter-terrorist thinkers in the world are the Israelis."

In late 1994, accompanied by Nikita Smidovich and a second UNSCOM colleague, Ritter flew to Tel Aviv and was granted a meeting with Uri Saguy, then the chief of Israeli military intelligence, and his top aides. Ritter had big ideas about how to use Israeli intelligence against Iraq, and he wanted to start on them right away, but the Israelis told him to slow down, saying that their own security interests prevented them from simply opening their files to UNSCOM. The Israelis told Ritter that he needed to present his requests "in a context," and then, perhaps, they could help.

Ritter thought of a context: What if he brought U-2 film to Israel? Could the Israelis then process it and, applying their own information, help him to identify inspection targets in Iraq? "That we can help you with," Ritter recounts the Israelis as saying. "And I said O.K."

From one perspective, Ritter's deal with the Israelis could be seen as a naked intelligence tradeout—American secrets (the photographs) for Israeli intelligence (photographic interpretation). But could Scott Ritter, who didn't even have a United States security clearance, pass along secret American imagery to Israel? Ritter knew that this was a problem, and he was also aware that his boss, Rolf Ekeus, had made a deal with the C.I.A. director when the U.N. received use of the U-2. "Our deal with the United States was that its photographs could be used only for the purpose of the monitoring and inspection of Iraq," Ekeus says. Ekeus had promised that the plane's imagery would not leave New York, much less be sent to another country.

Ritter went to Ekeus with his Israel proposal. "I said, 'Here's the deal, boss,'" Ritter recalls. "'I'm going to start doing intelligence with coöperation that is going to give us a whole new capability in terms of gathering information. We're going to get it from the Israelis. But in order to do this we have to go to Israel with the U-2 photographs.'" Ekeus says he will not confirm "anything about any country that we worked with," but according to Ritter he, Ekeus, and the UNSCOM deputy executive chairman, Charles Duelfer, met at the Princeton Club, in New York, to discuss the Israel idea with one of their C.I.A. contacts, who did not object and specifically approved Ritter's role. There had to be safeguards, the agency man said, and an elaborate system was devised for the handling of the film. It was to be kept in a safe behind a locked door that could be opened only by a dual key that required the presence of Ritter and the Israelis. As Ritter describes it, the actual handoff of the film was borrowed from a compendium of spy-novel clichés. "You had these C.I.A. guys walking around the U.N. with a bag of film with them," he says. "And Charles went down the staircase and they came up the staircase, and they sort of stopped and they put the suitcase down and they walked away. And Charles picked up the suitcase and walked upstairs and gave me the material."

Giving American photographic imagery of Iraq to Israel was, of course, a highly sensitive matter. Theoretically, Israel could use the photographs for targeting purposes. But the undertaking had an aspect of farce, too. After the first exchange with the Israelis, Ritter returned the bag, which contained the original positive images, to the safe in New York, according to plan, and then flew to Washington with a bag of negatives, which were created when prints were made in Israel. He tried to turn in the negatives to the C.I.A. But no one at the agency wanted to accept them, because, Ritter says, that hadn't been planned for. According to Ritter, he was told only, "Do the right thing." He went home and stuffed the bag of negatives under his bed.

RITTER says that during his inspections he always formally respected the "dignity of Iraq's sovereignty," but his approach also had a leatherneck quality. "It was certainly not routine," Chris Cobb-Smith, a former British artillery commando, who was one of Ritter's closest associates on the concealment-mechanism team, recalls. "You cannot go in acting, well, politically correct. You can't walk in dithering around."

This was an attitude that Ritter tried to instill in his team before every inspection. On a typical mission, about thirty team members would assemble early in the morning, and Ritter, wearing a light-blue UNSCOM baseball cap, would give them his "alpha dog" speech, an example of which he recently recounted:

> The Iraqis, they're like sharks. Fear is like blood. They smell it and they'll come in at you, and they'll intimidate you. Once that game of intimidation starts, you're never going to win. . . .
>
> When I go into a site I am going to be polite, I am going to shake their hand, but I am the alpha dog. I'm going in tail held high. If they growl at me, I'm gonna jump on 'em, I'm gonna let 'em know who the boss is here. I'm in charge. They report to me, they do what I say.
>
> You work for me, so every one of you are alpha dogs. When we go to a site, they're gonna know we're there, we're gonna raise our tails and we're gonna spray urine all over their walls—that's the equivalent of what we're doing. So when we leave a site they know they've been inspected.

"You should see some of the guys when they hear this thing," Ritter says, with a smile. "Especially the French. But they love it. It's called 'team building.' "

One of the curious aspects of Iraq's concealment mechanism was that Saddam's regime, although it denied having a secret-weapons program, maintained meticulous records of the program that it was denying it had. This vast archive, situated in factories and government offices across Baghdad, became an obvious UNSCOM target, and the object of much to-ing and fro-ing between UNSCOM and Iraqi authorities. In one case, UNSCOM knew that although it had found no contraband missiles, Iraq did have records of a ballistic-missile program, which was called Project 144. Ritter figured that one way of finding missiles was by going after the guidance systems needed to operate them, and that the archives probably held clues. He planned inspections at a series of electronics plants, including one that inspectors believed was involved in the production or acquisition of components used in missile computer simulations. When the team arrived at the plant, officials there, of course, denied knowledge of Project 144. But the team's computer expert scanned one of the plant's hard drives and recovered a trove of data pertaining to the project. "It was a very successful inspection—considered to be *the* most successful," Ritter says. "We got computer data, documents—we just collected a whole bunch of information about the Iraqi ballistic-missile program, which Iraq had not declared to us."

But no single factor was as valuable to UNSCOM's mission as the assistance provided by Israel. By the summer of 1995, the range of the Israelis' assistance to UNSCOM had moved well beyond interpretation of U-2 photographs. "I'd start asking more detailed questions, and they'd put me in touch with their analysts," Ritter says. "So now it's not just photo interpreters—I'm getting access to their intelligence community."

The Israeli connection was directly responsible for an event that may have been the UNSCOM intelligence unit's biggest coup, and also its most bitter disappointment. The team discovered through an Israeli tip that Iraq had contracted for the purchase of a shipment of gyroscopes, used in missile guidance, and that this would be the first solid evidence of an ongoing effort to reconstitute Iraq's missile program. The shipment was to be delivered through Jordan by a Palestinian go-between. Acting on that information, UNSCOM

CHIFFON MORNING

I

I am lying in bed with my mother,
where my father seldom lay. Little poem,
help me to say all I need to say, better.
Hair dyed, combed; nails polished; necklacelike scar
ear to ear; stocky peasant's bulk hidden
under an unfeminine nightgown; sour-milk
breaths rehearsing death—she faces me, her room
a pill museum where orange tea bags
draining on napkins almost pass for art.
Even the Christmas amaryllis sags
under the weight of its blood-red
petals, unfolding like a handkerchief.
From the television screen, a beauty-
pageant queen waves serenely at me.

II

In the oily black barbecue smoke,
in our blue Chevrolet station wagon,
in a cottage at the sea, no one spoke
but me to the nerveless God
who never once stopped their loveless act:
the cursing mouths, the shoving and choking,
the violent pulse, the wrecked hair, the hunchbacked
reprisal, the suddenly inverted sky,
the fiendish gasping, the blade that cuts all
understanding, the white knuckles, the fly
remarkably poised on a blue throat.
I try to pity them. Perhaps God did
on those occasions when battle was a prelude
to sex, and peace, like an arrow, found us.

III

As the cuckoo clock crows in the kitchen,
on her nightstand others as bluntly chime,
but cannot break her drugged oblivion.
Please wake up, Mother, and wet your cotton mouth.
"She was agitated," nurses whispered
when we found her tied to the bed, knocked out.
Demerol blocked the pain, entering through the eyes,
while the mind, crushed like a wineglass, healed.
"I'll bury you all," she gloated, at home again.
Months later, they stitched her throat in surgery.
The voice that had been on the radio
when the war was on plunged a tragic octave.
More pills crowded her daily glass of milk.
My guilt seemed vain compared to what she felt.

IV

Mother is naked and holding me up
above her as soap streams from my face
(I'm wearing a dumb ape's frown) into the tub
where she is seated: the mind replays
what nurtures it. The black months when she
would lie assassinated like our Siamese cat
are still far off. Yet, tranced by a lush light,
which no one else sees, like a leaden bee
shackled to a poppy, I am not free.
Each time I am dunked in the green, green
sacramental water, I glare shamelessly
as she shrieks and kisses me, gripped in air;
I do not know if she loves me or cares,
if it's suffering or joy behind her tears.

—Henri Cole

planned to intercept the shipment, and Ritter approached the United States intelligence community for help. He was turned down. He then returned to Israel and, he says, told the Israelis that with some key additional information UNSCOM could arrange the interception itself. That November, Israel provided the necessary information, and Ritter made his move. He travelled to Amman and met with Ali Shukri, a key aide to King Hussein, told him about the shipment of gyroscopes, and asked for help in the intercept. The Jordanian agreed. "That night, we got them," Ritter says.

However, Ritter says, the C.I.A., having refused to help him, suddenly arranged to have the gyros intercepted a second time, by the agency in Jordan; the shipment never reached UNSCOM analysts in New York. Ritter, who had allies in the C.I.A. in both New York and Washington, blames the incident on territorial imperative. The C.I.A. official who directs Mideast operations, Ritter says, was "starting to view me as competition. He's pissed off at me because I'm getting better access to Israel than he is."

Government officials decline to comment on the matter. Ritter does note that the C.I.A. later provided a report on the haul to UNSCOM.

III. SHAKING THE TREE

PERHAPS the ultimate expression of UNSCOM's intelligence operation was a program conceived by Ritter in 1995 that he called Shake the Tree. The concept was simple, but its execution and its political implications were not. Intelligence-gathering mechanisms provided by Israel, Great Britain, and, eventually, the United States allowed UNSCOM to penetrate the operational command center of the Iraqis' concealment mechanism by monitoring their concealment efforts almost as they occurred. On one occasion this year, for example, the UNSCOM team scheduled an inspection and, as usual, met its Iraqi escorts at the team's Baghdad headquarters, the Monitoring and Verification Center. But instead of proceeding to an announced inspection site the team headed around the corner and entered an adjacent building. Ritter told the startled Iraqis that he knew they were using electronic-surveillance methods to eavesdrop on the UNSCOM staff, and his team began to search the room for bugs. It found none, but the real purpose of the surprise was to excite the people who were running the concealment mechanism, so that their responses could be observed, and learned from. "This is to shake the Iraqis," Ritter recalled of the surprise mission. "And that makes them paranoid. Hopefully, they'll react to that paranoia and we can detect their reaction. As I say, it's very unconventional arms control. But people have to understand that this is the enemy. It's not a coöperative venture here. These are people who will do anything to keep us away from these weapons."

Shake the Tree was Ritter-style arms control at its most effective, but from its inception it put UNSCOM on a collision course with the American-led policy of the time: backing inspections with the threat of force. It helped to draw UNSCOM toward the secret corners of Iraq which Saddam most wanted to protect. This was, of course, its purpose, but the inevitable result was a series of crises that led to last winter's militarized showdown, when the resolve to force inspections was finally spent.

The trouble began with the very first test of the system—an inspection called UNSCOM 143, in March of 1996. The Iraqis partially blocked the inspection, prompting Washington to push the Security Council for a resolution denouncing the action as a "material breach" of Iraq's obligation to allow inspections. In U.N. diplospeak, "material breach" is a verbal trigger, meaning there are grounds for military action. But France and Russia did not yet want to pull the trigger, so a weaker resolution was passed. The United States, however, did win the promise for material-breach language the next time Iraq blocked an important inspection.

That occasion came in June, with an operation called UNSCOM 150, which tried to probe what Iraq said was a "sensitive site." The inspection was blocked, and the inspectors left Iraq. En route to Bahrain, the inspectors felt certain that they knew what was coming next. "As we're flying out, we were all waiting for the cruise missiles to come by us on their way in," Ritter recalls. "We knew for certain. I mean, this is the deal that we made: if they block us, they'd die." Indeed, when UNSCOM 150 was blocked, Madeleine Albright, then the United States Ambassador to the U.N., with the promise of material-breach language in her back pocket, tried to marshal support for military action, but France and Russia balked again. They insisted upon giving Iraq still another chance to comply, and Rolf Ekeus intervened personally. After a long negotiation, Ekeus won an Iraqi agreement to allow the inspection, but only, according to Ritter, after granting Baghdad a significant concession: the number of inspectors allowed to enter a sensitive site would be limited to four.

Ritter saw the agreement as a clear defeat, but he and his team looked for a way to find some advantage in it. UNSCOM believed that Iraq's concealment operation was run by the same security units that protected Saddam, and Ritter assumed that if they were pressed they would follow procedures similar to those designed to protect Saddam in an emergency. Israeli intelligence sources had told UNSCOM that when Saddam felt threatened his strategy was to move first from his Baghdad headquarters to a stronghold near the Saddam Hussein International Airport and, after that, to a Presidential complex north of Tikrit, his home town and sanctuary of last resort. Part of the purpose of UNSCOM 150, in June, had been to test that theory, and in this respect UNSCOM 150 had not been a total loss. Using the observation mechanisms of Shake the Tree, UNSCOM discovered that the 2nd Company of the 1st Battalion of the Special Republican Guards was moving vehicles—and, presumably, key weapons materials—to a Republican Guard facility just south of Saddam Hussein airport. On the basis of this information, and as a test of the deal that the Iraqis had made with Ekeus in June, Ritter planned a July inspection at the airport facility. He knew that it would probably be provocative. The inspection was blocked at gunpoint. After a few days' delay, the team was finally allowed into the "sensitive site," but by then, not surprisingly, it had been swept of its contraband.

The course was thus set toward retreat, although this was not yet obvious. Within the Security Council, member nations began to question the new confrontational thrust of UNSCOM, and wondered what had happened to the more conventional approach, of reckoning Iraq's actual weapons of mass destruction. "Many members of the council said they had never authorized an UNSCOM that had a concealment team," a senior Administration official says, and that theme was sounded at every opportunity. Iraqi diplomats worked the Security Council skillfully and to great effect. Whether it was the product of statecraft or of other, less lofty motivations, the gathering consensus within the Security Council, beginning in the summer of 1996, was that UNSCOM's mission should start moving toward some conclusion.

In November of 1997, Iraq accused Ritter and his team of provocation, and Saddam expelled the American inspectors. In response, the entire force of UNSCOM inspectors withdrew, and the United States military buildup began. By the end of the month, a Russian-brokered deal allowed the inspectors back in, but only with more concessions to Baghdad, and the crisis smoldered. Then, last January, Iraq halted inspections again, and again Baghdad was candid about its reason. "Our only problem right now," Iraq's U.N. Ambassador, Nizar Hamdoon, told American television, "is with the current team of Mr. Ritter."

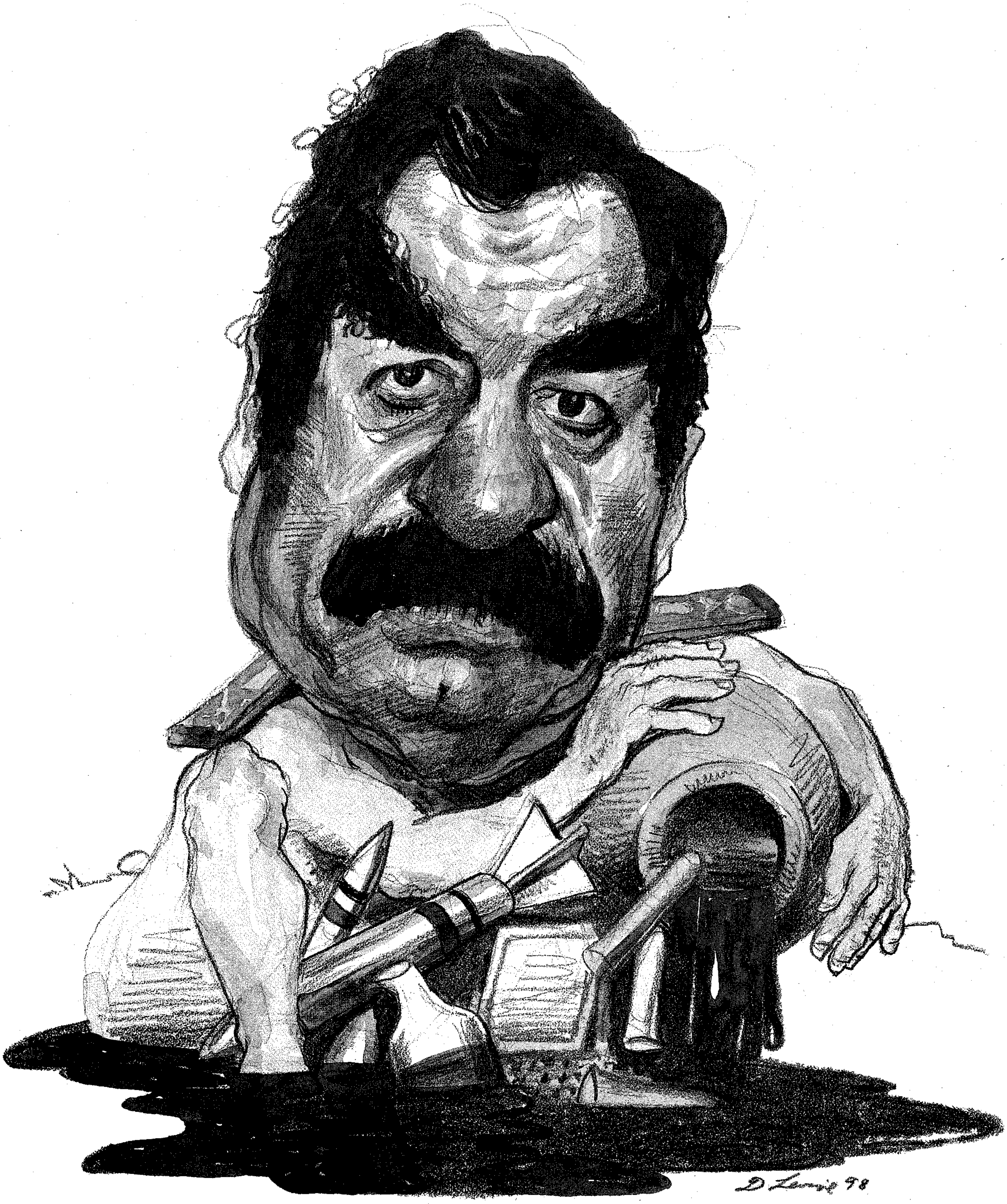
The Administration stiffened, and sent reinforcements to the Persian Gulf. President Clinton said that the latest Iraqi outrage warranted "strong and unambiguous action," and he even addressed the Iraqi complaints about Ritter: "Certainly Saddam Hussein shouldn't be able to pick and choose who does this work." Secretary of State Albright and other Administration officials were equally outspoken in their public pronouncements. But privately American policymakers were deeply ambivalent about the Iraq policy, and had been since the start of the crisis, in the fall.

Since 1991, American policy had been to insist that Iraq comply with the U.N. resolution requiring complete disarmament under the threat of force. Now Saddam had obliged Washington to confront the root implication of that policy—a commitment to go to war over UNSCOM. That raised the question of degree: What offense against UNSCOM would trigger war? The shutdown of UNSCOM? The expulsion of American inspectors? The blocking of one inspection? "It was never really clearly established," says the senior official, who was involved in the debate, because until then "the President didn't have to make that decision."

This process of reductive reasoning eventually led to a bracing bottom line: America could find itself at war over Scott Ritter. By degrees, and quietly, American policy changed.

For a time, Washington tried to guide UNSCOM away from confrontation, weighing in on specific inspections. "In a couple of instances, we gave tactical advice," the Administration official allows, but the official also argued that at least on one occasion the Administration's position was more hard-line than Ritter's. Whatever it was, Ritter called it "interference." Last November, after the Russian compromise put UNSCOM's inspectors back in Iraq, Ritter got approval for a surprise inspection at the headquarters of the Iraqi Republican Guards' 3rd Battalion—the heart of the concealment mechanism. Ritter says that the Americans intervened at the last minute, saying, "It would be too confrontational, and we shouldn't do it. Find another target." In December, UNSCOM planned a series of inspections at the Special Security Organization's Baghdad headquarters, at the Presidential complex near Tikrit, and at other sensitive sites. According to Ritter, after the first inspection excited Iraqi indignation, Washington pressed UNSCOM to cancel the other controversial inspections, and it did. "They said if we confronted Iraq now the U.S. didn't have the domestic support for a war during Christmas," Ritter says.

Personally and symbolically, Ritter had become a handy device in Iraq's effort to isolate the United States in the Security Council. France, Russia, and China began to question the value of confrontational inspections. "Scott became a lightning rod for that," says the American official familiar with the Security Council debates. President Clinton may have proclaimed in the midst of



Ritter finally grasped Saddam's secret: The Iraqi leader had entrusted his deadly-weapons program to his personal guards, who moved coolers of germs and components of nuclear weapons from site to site in a brilliantly executed game of hide-and-seek.

the January crisis that Saddam Hussein had no veto power over Scott Ritter, but as he spoke those words the United States itself was about to veto Ritter.

By January, Ritter was pursuing what he hoped would be an explosive UNSCOM discovery—evidence that Iraq had conducted biological experiments on political prisoners. On January 12th, he directed two portions of his team to prisons outside Baghdad, and he himself led the rest of the team into the day's big target: the General Security Directorate, Iraq's secret-police headquarters, in Baghdad. Once inside, Ritter went into his alpha-dog routine, saying to the Iraqis, "Look, I'm going to tell you right up front: you guys tested biological agents on humans in 1995—this is the organization that was involved." Ritter wanted to scour the office of the minister of the directorate, but the Iraqis warned him that doing so might spark a crisis. "I'm dealing with the people who are responsible for killing these prisoners and doing these horrible biological experiments," Ritter recalls. "But I'm walking a thin line, because I have to be really careful not to overextend myself and hurt the executive chairman by opening UNSCOM to charges of not respecting sovereignty. So what I'm trying to do is talk to them and get a story from them that I can then compare with the data I get out of the prisons from my two teams. And, if I get a contradiction, then I'm going up to the minister's office and I'm going to basically rape his office. No, rape's a horrible thing. I'm going to take down his office and not be too circumspect about it."

Ritter never got inside the minister's office. Officials at the directorate explained to him that it was the evening before a holy day, and their families were expecting them home for a feast. They implored him to resume the inspection in the morning. Ritter agreed. "I have to admit that I fell into a trap," he says now, still plainly stung. "It's something that an alpha dog wouldn't have done." ("The bottom line is that the depiction of Scott Ritter as a trigger-happy guy is wrong," Bill Richardson, the former United States Ambassador to the U.N., says. "In a way, he was a diplomat.") When Ritter returned to the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Center, the place was abuzz. The Iraqis had announced that they were suspending inspections.

According to Ritter, he telephoned Richard Butler, who had succeeded Ekeus as UNSCOM's executive chairman in July, 1997. Ritter suggested that they try to profit from the standoff. He said he would gather his team the next morning and report to the directorate, as he had agreed, and if he and his team were refused entry the world press would be there to record Baghdad's recalcitrance. Butler agreed, and the next day Ritter's group made the journey to the directorate, and pictures of the Iraqi rebuff were transmitted around the world. (In Washington, the national-security team watched the latest adventure of the man they'd come to call Darth Ritter with interest.) Ritter repeated the routine again the following day, and then he decided on a bold move. Assuming that the directorate had by this time been cleansed of incriminating evidence, he proposed to Butler a surprise inspection at the headquarters of the Special Security Organization itself: "I said, 'Let's just skip an echelon here and go straight to the top, we'll go for the throat.'" Ritter's plan was to surround the entire neighborhood with inspectors and conduct a building-to-building search for documents. Butler approved the plan for January 16th. Both men were certain that Iraq would block the inspection, and Ritter got what he believed was a clear signal that Washington intended to respond at last with "serious consequences." The warships were in place, the fighter pilots were on alert, the missiles were poised. Ritter recalls being told by an UNSCOM colleague that "the national-security adviser to the President of the United States said, 'If they stop this inspection, bring the hammer on down.'" But on January 15th, the night before the inspection, Ritter got a call from Butler ordering Ritter's withdrawal. Butler had heard from Ambassador Richardson, and now he was ordering Ritter back to Bahrain. Butler himself was coming to Baghdad in the hope of averting a crisis. A member of the American national-security team prepared a statement for Ritter to read to the press before leaving Baghdad, and he agreed to do it. But, as a sign of protest, he wore a black sweater and refused to appear before cameras wearing his UNSCOM cap. He read the statement, an innocuous recital of UNSCOM's mission, and then ad-libbed, "We will be back."

In fact, when Ritter left Baghdad he had no idea whether he would ever return, or why he had been withdrawn.

In Bahrain, Ritter ran into Charles Duelfer, the UNSCOM deputy executive chairman, who had some disturbing news. "He pulled me aside," Ritter recalls, "and he said, 'Scott, you won't believe what's going on. You have no idea. Washington is going crazy, they're insane. When you get back to New York, some bad things might start happening.'"

When Ritter got to New York, he went to one of his sources in the intelligence community, who bent a rule and told Ritter what he'd heard. While the President's national-security team was in the midst of a fevered session about the implications of Ritter's planned inspection of the S.S.O. headquarters, debating when and how to strike if the inspection was blocked, someone dropped a bombshell: news that Ritter was under investigation by the F.B.I. "For what?" Ritter wanted to know. "Espionage," his source told him.

Ritter's first thought was about Marina. While Scott was out of the country on assignment, Marina, who speaks five languages, applied for a translating job at the F.B.I. After an interview, she was asked to take a polygraph test, and she agreed. She answered every question, but the agent administering the test kept returning to two queries, posing them in different phrasing: Had she ever shoplifted? And had her move to the United States been sponsored by any agency of another country's government? Marina firmly said no to the questions, but she later came to understand that the F.B.I. had not been satisfied by the results of her polygraph, and that she would not be getting the job.

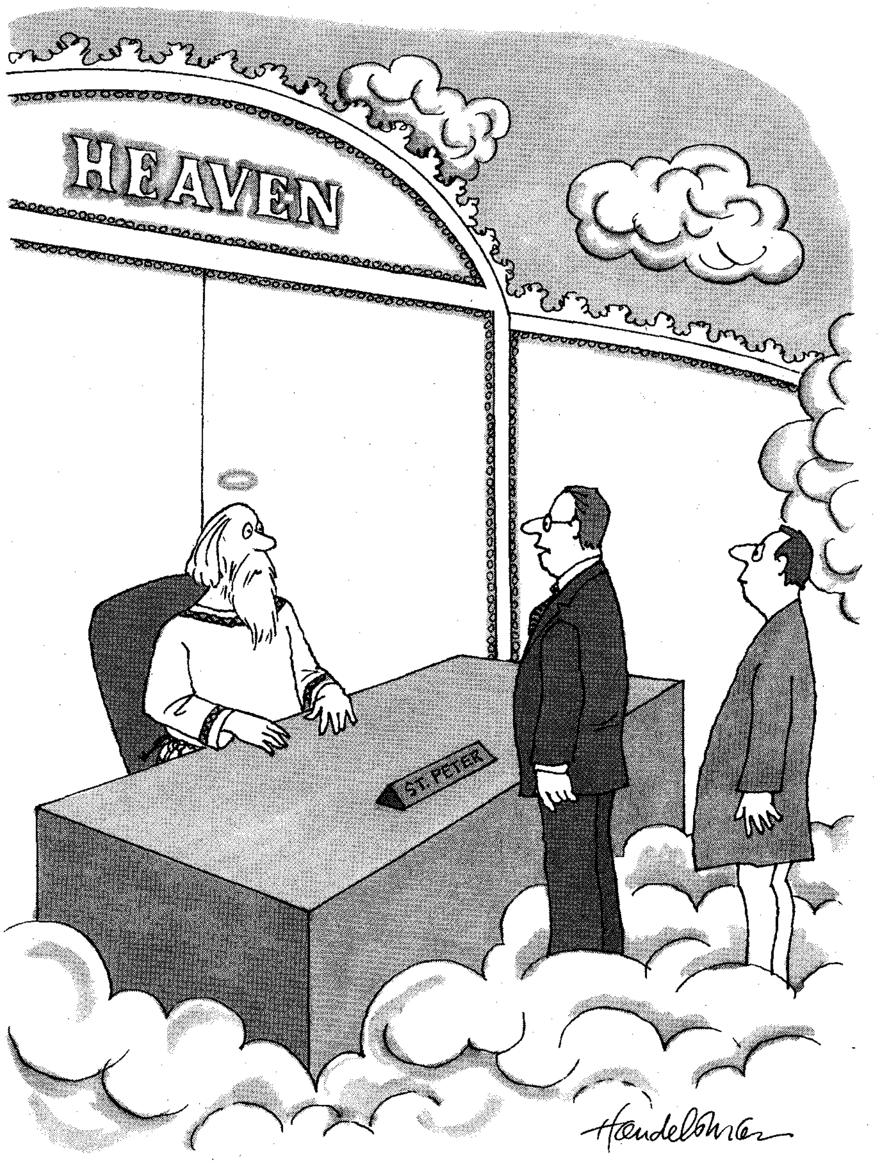
But the espionage investigation wasn't about Marina, Ritter's source told him. It was about Israel. Then the pieces came together. In the summer of 1996, when Shake the Tree really got going, Ritter had been approached by one of the covert types he'd been working with from the C.I.A., who suggested that he apply for a job at the agency. There would soon be a position open, and Ritter could quickly make his way into the covert directorate. Ritter applied for the agency's élite career-training program and was selected to go to C.I.A. headquarters, in northern Virginia, for an interview. Afterward, there was a polygraph examination.

According to Ritter (who is the sole source for this description), the C.I.A. interviewer asked him mostly about Israel. He was surprised by the detailed nature of the questions and by the degree of knowledge about his activities which they implied. The interviewer kept returning to three questions, asking Ritter whether he had ever passed classified United States information to another government, whether he had received money or other compensation for doing so, and whether he had ever had secret, unauthorized meetings with Israeli intelligence agents. Ritter had passed what was ordinarily classified information—the U-2 photographs—to Israel, and he had secretly met with Israeli agents in Manhattan bars and in other sites in connection with his UNSCOM work. "I really didn't want to get into it, because it's really none of their business," Ritter says. "It has nothing to do with United States classified information. It has everything to do with Israeli operational security and protecting lives." But the interviewer persisted, and Ritter reluctantly answered the questions. A couple of hours into the session, Ritter says, the interviewer stopped and said, "Look, I'm afraid I have to tell you that if we stopped this polygraph right now, if you walked out, I want you to know I'm going to have to turn this over as an espionage case. . . . What you're telling me disturbs me greatly."

Ritter says he asked the interviewer to turn off the polygraph machine and he then explained his relationship with Israel, and why he was sensitive about fully answering questions regarding every detail. After a break for lunch, another interviewer came in, a man identified to Ritter as a senior polygrapher, and the process started again. Ritter says he told the man everything—including the part about stuffing the bag of U-2 negatives under his bed. But it wasn't enough, and the polygrapher asked Ritter to "think about it overnight and come back tomorrow." Ritter did so. Again there were more questions, again Ritter was told that the machine indicated he was holding back. After a time, the interviewer stopped and told Ritter to disengage himself from the polygraph monitors. "He says, 'Scott, look, we're wasting our time here. You've got problems, big problems,'" Ritter recalls. "The machine says you're not being forthcoming to us, you're not telling us the whole truth. This is serious, because we're talking about espionage." A month or two later, Ritter was notified that he did not get the job. Ritter says he thought, No big deal, and he returned to his work with UNSCOM and Shake the Tree.

Ritter's quandary was a perhaps inevitable result of his unique position—U.N. spy. His contacts at the C.I.A. knew about his work for UNSCOM and his dealings with Israel and other governments, and he was reassured by two sources at the agency that the interrogation was just routine. It was "bullshit," one said, and would be over in six months.

The investigation did not end in six months. The agency turned over the results of his polygraph to the counterintelligence division of the F.B.I., which opened an investigation in 1997. That investigation was still under way during the crisis last January, when the national-security team gathered to consider the possibility of launching a war because Scott Ritter had been blocked from an inspection. No one at the bureau or at the C.I.A. would comment for this story. A senior Administration official said that he could not specifically verify the events, or comment on the impact that the investigation of Ritter had had on



"Let's be reasonable. Just approve my client, and we'll all be spared a lot of nasty litigation."

"Don't overdo it, dear."

the decision to withdraw him in January. This official did say, however, "What mattered to us in the fall and winter on this specific area is that if it were true . . . then one consideration for a responsible decision-maker would have to be 'How exposed is he personally to risk? And how exposed are we to criticism for a decision that we would otherwise like to make?' Those calculations would have to be made." Ritter says that in this context he "absolutely" understands the concern in Washington over his Israeli connections. Bill Richardson, whose intelligence sources vouched for Ritter, carried Ritter's brief in the Administration, and remained a consistently strong advocate of punishing Saddam. But for others the Ritter allegations seemed to crystallize anxieties inherent in the policy of forcing strict Iraqi compliance with Resolution 687. Saddam was accusing Ritter of being a provocateur. America could not go to war over Ritter unless it was sure that he wasn't.

IV. ANYBODY BUT RITTER

WHEN Kofi Annan averted war last February, Ritter claims, Annan secretly promised Iraq that the confrontational inspections Saddam most resented—the intrusions into the Presidential sites—would occur only once, and that they would all be conducted within four months. Timetables, in matters big and small, are Iraq's abiding desire in diplomacy, and those in the Administration who most forcefully favored the policy of compliance considered the Annan agreement little more than appeasement. If Ritter was right about Annan's secret deal, it couldn't have been good for UNSCOM, because it had the effect of creating untouchable sanctuaries for weapons components and documents once the sites had been inspected. But the Memorandum of Understanding brokered by Annan with Iraq provided the conveyance by which American policy moved from enforcing Iraqi compliance to mere "containment"—maintaining the status quo—and in political terms it was a godsend for the Clinton Administration. The compliance policy had, in its final throes, brought the United States to the edge of a war that wasn't selling, internationally or at home. The President's personal scandal, the Lewinsky affair, was still new and vital at that moment, and made it extremely difficult for the White House to offer a case for Gulf War II even if it wanted to. (Protesters were already calling it "Monica's war.") This was made painfully clear on February 18th, when Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and Samuel R. (Sandy) Berger, the national-security adviser, were dispatched to Ohio State University for an international "town hall" meeting on Iraq, which was televised by CNN. Although Albright argued passionately for an America that was "the indispensable nation, willing to make the world safe"—the language of the muscular compliance policy—the story of the event was the disruptive protests it inspired from some members of the audience, which led the Administration to a politics of retreat. Five days later, Annan announced his agreement with Saddam. The Administration dearly wanted Annan's peace to hold.

Annan's agreement brought the inspectors back into Iraq, and that raised the question of Scott Ritter again. He was already planning an all-new "real in-your-face inspection," as he puts it. Ritter's idea for UNSCOM's return, in March, was to go right back to the concealment mechanism, with a series of inspections at sensitive S.S.O. sites. Washington had its own suggestion—an inspection of the Iraqi Defense Ministry. Richard Butler approved it. But the real debate was over Ritter. The March inspections, which were called UNSCOM 227-B, would be a test of the Annan agreement, and Albright, reflecting the Administration's new turn, didn't want it derailed by Ritter's becoming an issue. On March 2nd, the Security Council passed Resolution 1154, vowing the "severest consequences" if Iraq blocked the inspections, and that same day Albright urged Butler to put anybody but Ritter at the head of the inspection team. The next day, Butler conveyed this message to Ritter, and asked him to step aside as chief inspector and to suggest other leadership options. Ritter wrote Butler a seven-page memorandum on what he called "the Ritter factor," which, not surprisingly, concluded that there was no reasonable leadership option for UNSCOM 227-B except Scott Ritter. More convincingly, the other leaders of the inspection team revolted over Butler's removal of Ritter. In an "Eyes Only" memorandum to the chairman on March 4th, the leaders said that they could not lead the inspections. "Only Scott Ritter has the in-depth knowledge . . . of the personalities and organizations that this inspection was to pursue," the memo read.

In New York, Ambassador Richardson argued that Ritter should conduct the inspections in the manner he saw fit and that the burden of comity should be placed on Saddam. To bolster his position, Richardson operated furiously behind the scenes to shift the political balance inside the Administration. Richardson planned to attend *Time's* seventy-fifth-anniversary gala at Radio City Music Hall, on March 3rd—an event to which both the President and Richard Butler were invited. Inside the clamorous hall, Richardson maneuvered President Clinton into a brief meeting with Butler, which Richardson was able to portray as an enthusiastic Presidential endorsement of Ritter and his inspection. Albright relented, and Ritter was allowed to lead UNSCOM 227-B.

But Scott Ritter's war was effectively over. Although he believed that his March inspections had brought UNSCOM closer than ever to breaking through the concealment mechanism (they were monitoring the subsequent movements of the Iraqi participants), he soon found himself out in the cold. In April, Israel and Britain stopped providing the highly sensitive intelligence support that had been so critical to Shake the Tree. "One day I was getting reports, the next day I stopped getting reports," Ritter says. "And then I travel overseas and ask what's going on and I find out that the Americans have put pressure on the people who were supporting us to withdraw their support—London and Israel."

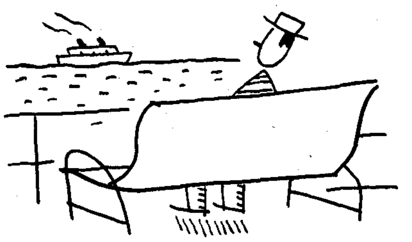
American officials say that intelligence support stopped flowing not to UNSCOM but only to Scott Ritter, who, they felt, was in so many ways unnecessarily complicating a situation that was difficult enough without him. Ritter, whose view tended toward the absolute, saw only that the threat of force had effectively been taken off the table, and that without it UNSCOM was impotent. In Washington, some officials involved in national-security matters had wearied of Ritter's apparent impression that he knew which policy was best for the United States. "Who's in charge here?" the senior Administration official said to me. "Scott didn't go to the Ohio State event, and he doesn't have to mobilize the United States Congress, and he doesn't have to look over his shoulder at the Security Council. And he doesn't have to pay attention to Iraq's neighbors, who, after all, constitute an important part of our national interest in maintaining all this. That's all the President's job."

Despite the trend toward retreat, the U.N. still won a few skirmishes. A team led by the Russian inspector Nikita Smidovich discovered a dump full of destroyed Iraqi missiles. The team suspected that an analysis of the missile parts would prove that Iraq had made a weapon of the chemical poison VX, despite its claim that it hadn't, and subsequent tests proved the team right.

Finally, in August, the breaking point arrived for Ritter. UNSCOM planned to inspect two "sensitive sites" that were believed to be hiding places for ballistic-missile components and related documents. It was generally agreed that the inspections might provoke a crisis, and Albright, fearing as much, urged that they be postponed. Butler agreed, and eventually cancelled the inspections. On August 5th, Iraq declared that it would no longer coöperate with such "inspections of discovery." Diplomatically, Iraq pressed for a timetable on sanctions, and supported a proposal by the Secretary-General for a "comprehensive review" of Iraq's relationship with UNSCOM.

On August 25th, Ritter says, Butler, in the tortured middle, asked Ritter to consider "redefining" his team. Instead, Ritter submitted his resignation the next day, saying he would not be part of an American-endorsed U.N. policy that "constitutes a surrender to the Iraqi leadership."

Ritter, a man given to the dramatic gesture, hoped that his resignation might somehow reverse a policy trend. In the short run, it certainly has had some effect. It made America's changed Iraqi policy the subject of open debate in Congress and in the press. One high-ranking Administration official said that Ritter's resignation may even have "put force back on the table," at least as an option. This official said that, in the days after Ritter quit, the implications of his action were the subject at a meeting of Albright, Richardson, Cohen, Sandy Berger, and the C.I.A. director, George Tenet, and that the result was a policy paper sent to the President which proposed again considering force in seeking Saddam's compliance. And the Security Council, at America's urging, suspended the periodic reviews of sanctions against Iraq.



But Ritter's final volley will not change history, as he had hoped. Last month, Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, travelled from New York to Baghdad bearing Kofi Annan's latest offer to Saddam Hussein. It promised the comprehensive review of UNSCOM, which Ritter had opposed as being an invitation to investigate the investigators. That review, which may take place this month, would be followed by a review of the U.N.'s economic sanctions against Iraq, the last leverage (excluding the use of force) obliging Saddam to yield to the UNSCOM intrusions he finds so odious. There is also talk of attaching a timetable to the sanctions—the first step toward ending them altogether, Saddam's dearest wish. The United States is expected to oppose that proposal, but cannot rely on undivided Security Council support.

The manner of Ritter's leave-taking caused much displeasure within the Administration, particularly at the State Department, where Madeleine Albright took Ritter's allegations of American duplicity personally. "He doesn't have a clue about what our over-all policy has been," Albright said of Ritter. Asked about Albright's words, Ritter bristled. "I not only had a clue," he said. "I might have had a better clue than she does." But this swagger missed the point. Ritter did once have a special insight into American policy, and in a sense he *was* American policy, reduced to its elemental form: the alpha-dog inspector, who assumed there would be incoming missiles if his mission was frustrated. That policy changed. Scott Ritter didn't. In a more reflective moment, at his home a few days after he resigned, Ritter observed, "I have become a problem for the Americans." No one will dispute that. On the question of Scott Ritter, at least, the United States and Saddam Hussein have finally achieved accord. ♦

LIFE AND LETTERS

LAST WORDS

Those Hemingway wrote, and those he didn't.

BY JOAN DIDION

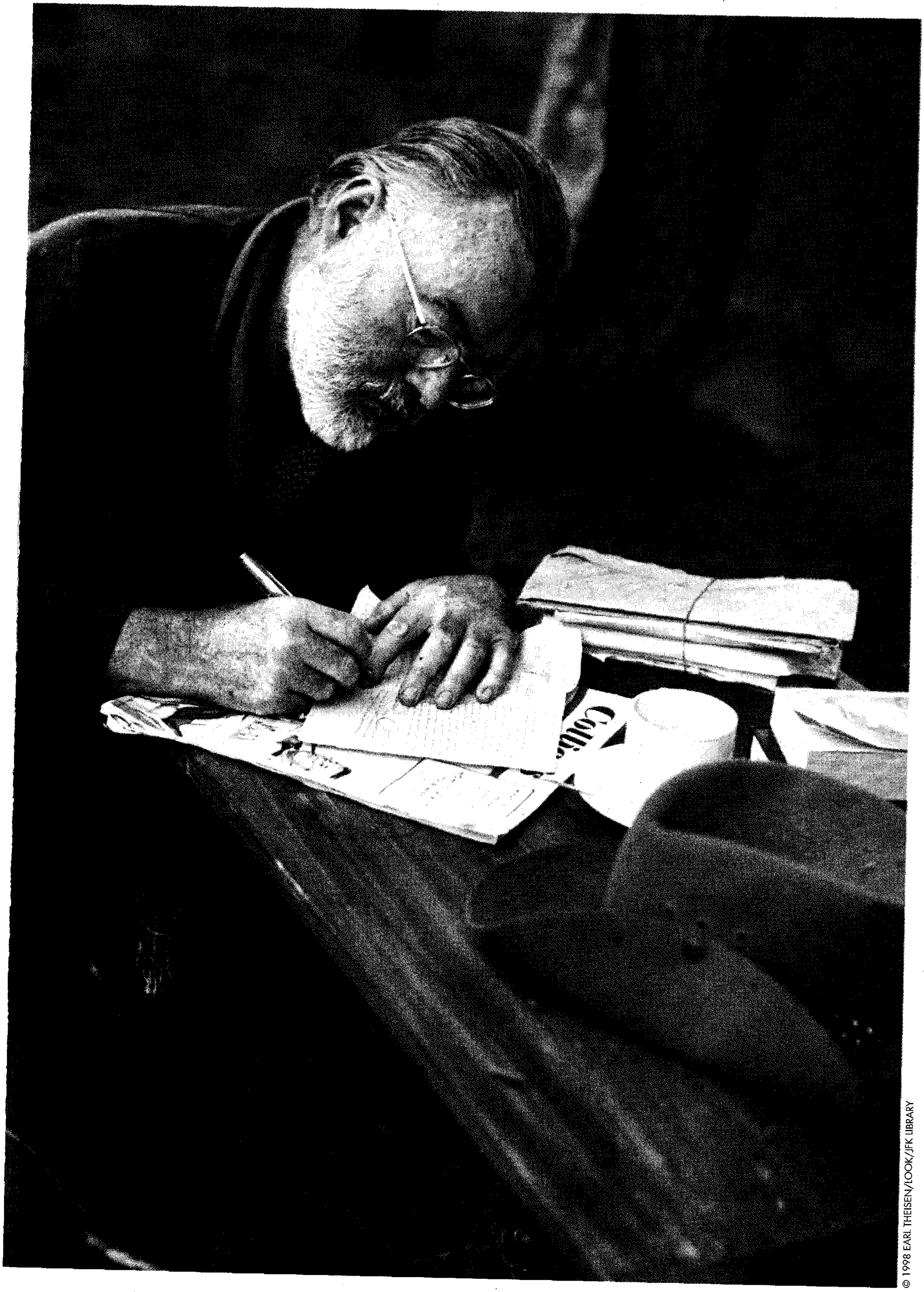
> In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees too were dusty and the leaves fell early that year and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling and the soldiers marching and afterward the road bare and white except for the leaves.

So goes the famous first paragraph of Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms," which I was moved to reread by the recent announcement that what was said to be Hemingway's last novel would be published posthumously next year. That paragraph, which was published in 1929, bears examination: four deceptively simple sentences, one hundred and twenty-six words, the arrangement of which remains as mysterious and thrilling to me now as it did when I first read them, at twelve or thirteen, and imagined that if I studied them closely enough and practiced hard enough I might one day arrange one hundred and twenty-six such words myself. Only one of the words has three syllables. Twenty-two have two. The other hundred and three have one. Twenty-four of the words are "the," fifteen are "and." There are four commas. The liturgical cadence of the paragraph derives in part from the placement of the commas (their presence in the second and fourth sentences, their absence in the first and third), but also from that repetition of "the" and of "and," creating a rhythm so pronounced that the omission of "the" before the word "leaves" in the fourth sentence ("and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling") casts exactly what it was meant to cast, a chill, a premonition, a foreshadowing of the story to come, the awareness that the author has already shifted his attention from late summer to a darker season. The power of the paragraph, offering as it does the illusion but not the fact of specificity, derives precisely from this kind of deliberate omission, from the tension of withheld information. In the late summer of *what* year? *What* river, *what* mountains, *what* troops?

We all know the "life" of the man who wrote that paragraph. The rather reckless attractions of the domestic details became fixed in the national memory stream: *Ernest and Hadley have no money, so they ski at Cortina all winter. Pauline comes to stay. Ernest and Hadley are at odds with each other over Pauline, so they all take refuge at Juan-les-Pins. Pauline catches cold, and recuperates at the Waldorf-Astoria.* We have seen the snapshots: the celebrated author fencing with the bulls at Pamplona, fishing for marlin off Havana, boxing at Bimini, crossing the Ebro with the Spanish loyalists, kneeling beside "his" lion or "his" buffalo or "his" oryx on the Serengeti Plain. We have observed the celebrated author's survivors, read his letters, deplored or found lessons in his excesses, in his striking of attitudes, in the humiliations of his claim to personal machismo, in the degradations both derived from and revealed by his apparent tolerance for his own celebrity.

"This is to tell you about a young man named Ernest Hemingway, who lives in Paris (an American), writes for the *transatlantic review* and has a brilliant future," F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote to Maxwell Perkins in 1924. "I'd look him up right away. He's the real thing." By the time "the real thing" had seen his brilliant future both realized and ruined, he had entered the valley of extreme emotional fragility, of depressions so grave that by February of

Ernest Hemingway in Kenya in 1954. Photograph by Earl Theisen.



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1961, after the first of what would be two courses of shock treatment, he found himself unable to complete even the single sentence he had agreed to contribute to a ceremonial volume for President John F. Kennedy. Early on the Sunday morning of July 2, 1961, the celebrated author got out of his bed in Ketchum, Idaho, went downstairs, took a double-barrelled Boss shotgun from a storage room in the cellar, and emptied both barrels into the center of his forehead. "I went downstairs," his fourth wife, Mary Welsh Hemingway, reported in her 1976 memoir, "How It Was," "saw a crumpled heap of bathrobe and blood, the shotgun lying in the disintegrated flesh, in the front vestibule of the sitting room."

THE didactic momentum of the biography was such that we sometimes forgot that this was a writer who had in his time made the English language new, changed the rhythms of the way both his own and the next few generations would speak and write and think. The very grammar of a Hemingway sentence dictated, or was dictated by, a certain way of looking at the world, a way of looking but not joining, a way of moving through but not attaching, a kind of romantic individualism distinctly adapted to its time and source. If we bought into those sentences, we would see the troops marching along the road, but we would not necessarily march with them. We would report, but not join. We would make, as Nick Adams made in the Nick Adams stories and as Frederic Henry made in "A Farewell to Arms," a separate peace: "In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more."

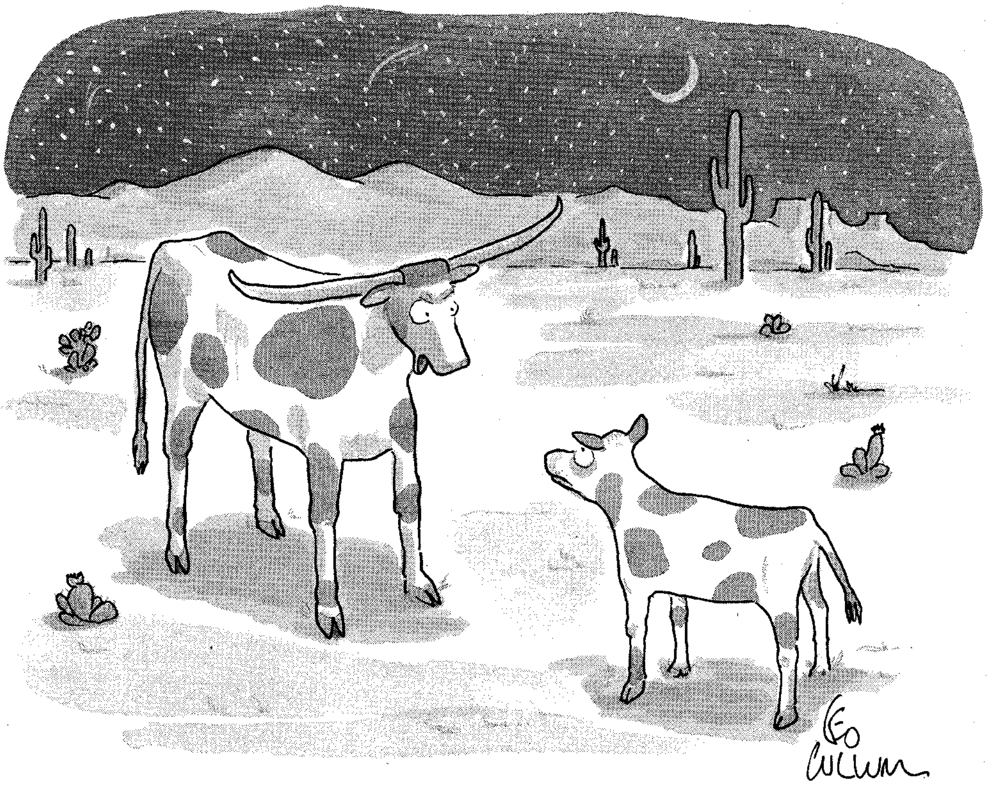
So pervasive was the effect of this Hemingway diction that it became the voice not only of his admirers but even of those whose approach to the world was in no way grounded in romantic individualism. I recall being surprised, when I was teaching George Orwell in a class at Berkeley in 1975, by how much of Hemingway could be heard in his sentences. "The hills opposite us were grey and wrinkled like the skins of elephants," Orwell had written in "Homage to Catalonia" in 1938. "The hills across the valley of the Ebro were long and white," Hemingway had written in "Hills Like White Elephants" in 1927. "A mass of Latin words falls upon the facts like soft snow, blurring the outlines and covering up all the details," Orwell had written in "Politics and the English Language" in 1946. "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain," Hemingway had written in "A Farewell to Arms" in 1929. "There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity."

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED
I'd love to come over and hang out, but now that we're competing in a global economy I can't.
R. Chast

This was a man to whom words mattered. He worked at them, he understood them, he got inside them. When he was twenty-four years old and reading submissions to Ford Madox Ford's *transatlantic review* he would sometimes try rewriting them, just for practice. His wish to be survived by only the words he determined fit for publication would have seemed clear enough. "I remember Ford telling me that a man should always write a letter thinking of how it would read to posterity," he wrote to Arthur Mizener in 1950. "This made such a bad impression on me that I burned every letter in the flat including Ford's." In a letter dated May 20, 1958, addressed "To my Executors" and placed in his library safe at La Finca Vigia, he wrote, "It is my wish that none of the letters written by me during my lifetime shall be published. Accordingly, I hereby request and direct you not to publish or consent to the publication by others of any such letters."

His widow and executor, Mary Welsh Hemingway, describing the burden of this restriction as one that "caused me continuous trouble, and disappointment to others," eventually chose to violate it, publishing excerpts from certain letters in "How It Was" and granting permission to Carlos Baker to publish some six hundred others in his "Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters, 1917-1961." "There can be no question about the wisdom and rightness of the decision," Baker wrote, for the letters "will not only instruct and entertain the general reader but also provide serious students of literature with the documents necessary to the continuing investigation of the life and achievements of one of the giants of twentieth-century American fiction."

THE peculiarity of being a writer is that the entire enterprise involves the mortal humiliation of seeing one's own words in print. The risk of publication is the grave fact of the life, and,



"It was different in the old days. They said, 'Git along little dogie,' and, by God, we got along."

• •

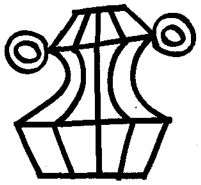
even among writers less inclined than Hemingway to construe words as the manifest expression of personal honor, the notion that words one has not risked publishing should be open to "continuing investigation" by "serious students of literature" could not be calculated to kindle enthusiasm. "Nobody likes to be tailed," Hemingway himself had in 1952 advised one such investigator, Charles A. Fenton of Yale, who on the evidence of the letters was tormenting Hemingway by sending him successive drafts of what would be "The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway: The Early Years." "You do not like to be tailed, investigated, queried about, by any amateur detective no matter how scholarly or how straight. You ought to be able to see that, Fenton." A month later Hemingway tried again. "I think you ought to drop the entire project," he wrote to Fenton, adding, "It is impossible to arrive at any truth without the co-operation of the person involved. That co-operation involves very nearly as much effort as for a man to write his autobiography." A few months later, he was still trying:

> In the first page or pages of your Mss. I found so many errors of fact that I could spend the rest of this winter re-writing and giving you the true gen and I would not be able to write anything of my own at all. . . . Another thing: You have located unsigned pieces by me through pay vouchers. But you do not know which pieces were changed or re-written by the copy desk and which were not. I know nothing worse for a writer than for his early writing which has been re-written and altered to be published without permission as his own.
>
> Actually I know few things worse than for another writer to collect a fellow writer's journalism which his fellow writer has elected not to preserve because it is worthless and publish it.
>
> Mr. Fenton I feel very strongly about this. I have written you so before and I write you now again. Writing that I do not wish to publish, you have no right to publish. I would no more do a thing like that to you than I would cheat a man at cards or rifle his desk or wastebasket or read his personal letters.

It might seem safe to assume that a writer who commits suicide has been less than entirely engaged by the work he leaves unfinished, yet there appears to have been not much question about what would happen to the unfinished Hemingway manuscripts. These included not only "the Paris stuff" (as he called it), or "A Moveable Feast" (as Scribner's called it), which Hemingway had in fact shown to Scribner's in 1959 and then withdrawn for revision, but also the novels later published under the titles "Islands in the Stream" and "The Garden of Eden," several Nick Adams stories, what Mrs. Hemingway called the "original treatment" of the bullfighting pieces published by *Life* before Hemingway's death (this became "The Dangerous Summer"), and what she described as "his semifictional account of our African safari," three selections from which she had published in *Sports Illustrated* in 1971 and 1972.

What followed was the systematic creation of a marketable product, a discrete body of work different in kind from, and in fact tending to obscure, the body of work published by Hemingway in his lifetime. So successful was the process of branding this product that in October, according to the House & Home section of the New York *Times*, Thomasville Furniture Industries introduced an "Ernest Hemingway Collection" at the International Home Furnishings Market in High Point, North Carolina, offering "96 pieces of living, dining and bedroom furniture and accessories" in four themes, "Kenya," "Key West," "Havana," and "Ketchum." "We don't have many heroes today," Marla A. Metzner, the president of Fashion Licensing of America, told the *Times*. "We're going back to the great icons of the century, as heroic brands." Ms. Metzner, according to the *Times*, not only "created the Ernest Hemingway brand with Hemingway's three sons, Jack, Gregory and Patrick," but "also represents F. Scott Fitzgerald's grandchildren, who have asked for a Fitzgerald brand."

That this would be the logical outcome of posthumous marketing cannot have been entirely clear to Mary Welsh Hemingway. During Hemingway's lifetime, she appears to have remained cool to the marketing impulses of A. E. Hotchner, whose thirteen-year correspondence with Hemingway gives the sense that he regarded the failing author not as the overextended and desperate figure the letters suggest but as an infinite resource, a mine to be worked, an element to be packaged into his various entertainment and publishing "projects." The widow tried to stop the publication of Hotchner's "Papa Hemingway," and, although the correspondence makes clear that Hemingway himself had both trusted and relied heavily on its author, presented him in her own memoir mainly as a kind of personal assistant, a fetcher of manuscripts, an arranger of apartments, a Zelig apparition in crowd scenes: "When the *Ile de France* docked in the Hudson River at noon, March 27, we were elated to find Charlie Sweeny, my favorite general, awaiting us, together with Lillian Ross, Al Horowitz, Hotchner and some others."



In this memoir, which is memorable mainly for the revelation of its author's rather trying mixture of quite striking competence and strategic incompetence (she arrives in Paris on the day it is liberated and scores a room at the Ritz, but seems bewildered by the domestic problem of how to improve the lighting of the dining room at La Finca Vigia), Mary Welsh Hemingway shared her conviction, at which she appears to have arrived in the face of considerable contrary evidence, that her husband had "clearly" expected her to publish "some, if not all, of his work." The guidelines she set for herself in this task were instructive: "Except for punctuation and the obviously overlooked 'ands' and 'buts' we would present his prose and poetry to readers as he wrote it, letting the gaps lie where they were."

WELL, there you are. You care about the punctuation or you don't, and Hemingway did. You care about the "ands" and the "buts" or you don't, and Hemingway did. You think something is in shape to be published or you don't, and Hemingway didn't. "This is it; there are no more books," Charles Scribner III told the New York *Times* by way of announcing the "Hemingway novel" to be published in July of 1999, to celebrate the centennial year of his birth. This piece of work, for which the title "True at First Light" was chosen from the text ("In Africa a thing is true at first light and a lie by noon and you have no more respect for it than for the lovely, perfect weed-fringed lake you see across the sun-baked salt plain"), is said to be the novel on which Hemingway was trying intermittently to work between 1954, when he and Mary Welsh Hemingway returned from the safari in Kenya which provides its narrative, and his suicide in 1961.

This "African novel" seems to have presented at first only the resistance that characterizes the early stage of any novel. In September of 1954, Hemingway wrote to Bernard Berenson from Cuba about the adverse effect of air-conditioning on this thing he was doing: "You get the writing done but it's as false as though it were done in the reverse of a greenhouse. Probably I will throw it all away, but maybe when the mornings are alive again I can use the skeleton of what I have written and fill it in with the smells and the early noises of the birds and all the lovely things of this finca which are in the cold months very much like Africa." In September of 1955, he wrote again to Berenson, this time on a new typewriter, explaining that he could not use his old one "because it has page 594 of the [African] book in it, covered over with the dust cover, and it is unlucky to take the pages out." In November of 1955, he reported to Harvey Breit, of the New York *Times*, "Am on page 689 and wish me luck kid." In January of 1956, he wrote to his attorney, Alfred Rice, that he had reached page 810.

There then falls, in the "Selected Letters," a certain silence on the matter of this African novel. Eight-hundred and ten pages or no, there comes a point at which every writer knows when a book is not working, and every writer also knows when the reserves of will and energy and memory and concentration required to make the thing work simply may not be available. "You just have to *go on* when it is worst and most helpless—there is only one thing to do with a novel and that is go straight on through to the end of the damn thing," Hemingway had written to F. Scott Fitzgerald in 1929, when Fitzgerald was blocked on the novel that would be published in 1934 as "Tender Is the Night."

In 1929, Hemingway was thirty. His concentration, or his ability to "*go on* when it is worst and most helpless," was still such that he had continued rewriting "A Farewell to Arms" while trying to deal, in the aftermath of his father's suicide in December of 1928, with the concerns of his mother, his sixteen-year-old sister, and his thirteen-year-old brother. "Realize of course that thing for me to do is not worry but get to work—finish my book properly so I can help them out with the proceeds," he had written to Maxwell Perkins within days of his father's funeral, and six weeks later he delivered the finished manuscript. He had seen one marriage destroyed, but not yet three. He was not yet living with the residue of the two 1954 plane crashes that had ruptured his liver, his spleen, and one of his kidneys, collapsed his lower intestine, crushed a vertebra, left first-degree burns on his face and head, and caused concussion and losses of vision and hearing. "Alfred this was a very rough year even before we smashed up in the air-craft," he wrote to Alfred Rice, who had apparently questioned his tax deductions for the African safari:

> But I have a diamond mine if people will let me alone and let me dig the stones out of the blue mud and then cut and polish them. If I can do it I will make more money for the Government than any Texas oilman that gets his depreciation. But I have been beat-up worse than you can be and still be around and I should be working steadily on getting better and then write and not think nor worry about anything else.

"The literal details of writing," Norman Mailer once told an interviewer, "involve one's own physiology or metabolism. You begin from a standing start and have to accelerate yourself to the point of cerebration where the words are coming—well, and in order. All writing is generated by a certain minimum of ego: you must assume a position of authority in saying that the way I'm writing it is the only way it happened. Writer's block, for example, is simply a failure of ego." In August of 1956, Hemingway advised Charles Scribner, Jr., that he had "found it impossible to resume work on the Africa book without some disciplinary writing," and so was writing short stories.

In November of 1958, he mentioned to one of his children that he wanted to "finish book" during a winter stay in Ketchum, but the "book" at issue was now "the Paris stuff." In April of 1960, he told Scribner to scratch this still untitled Paris book from the fall list: "Plenty of people will probably think that we have no book and that it is like all the outlines that Scott had and borrowed money on that he never could have finished but you know that if I did not want the chance to make it even better it could be published exactly as you saw it with a few corrections of Mary's typing." Ten months later, and five months before his death, in a letter written to his editor at Scribner's between the two courses of shock treatment administered to him at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, the writer tried, alarmingly, to explain what he was doing:

> Have material arranged as chapters—they come to 18—and am working on the last one—No *19*—also working on title. This is very difficult. (Have my usual long list—something wrong with all of them but am working toward it—Paris has been used so often it blights anything.) In pages typed they run 7, 14, 5, 6, 9 1/2, 6, 11, 9, 8, 9, 4 1/2, 3 1/2, 8, 10 1/2, 14 1/2, 38 1/2, 10, 3, 3: 177 pages + 5 1/2 pages + 1 1/4 pages.

I RECALL listening, some years ago at a dinner party in Berkeley, to a professor of English present "The Last Tycoon" as irrefutable proof that F. Scott Fitzgerald was a bad writer. The assurance with which this judgment was offered so stunned me that I had let it slip into the *donnée* of the evening before I managed to object. "The Last Tycoon," I said, was an unfinished book, one we had no way of judging because we had no way of knowing how Fitzgerald might have finished it. But of course we did, another guest said, and others joined in: We had Fitzgerald's "notes," we had Fitzgerald's "outline," the thing was "entirely laid out." Only one of us at the table that evening, in other words, saw a substantive difference between writing a book and making notes for it, or "outlining it," or "laying it out."

The most chilling scene ever filmed must be, for a writer, that moment in "The Shining" when Shelley Duvall looks at the manuscript on which her husband has been working and sees, typed over and over again on each of the hundreds of pages, only the single line: "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." The manuscript for what became "True at First Light" was, as Hemingway left it, some eight hundred and fifty pages long. The manuscript as edited for publication is half that. This editing was done by Hemingway's son Patrick, who has said that he limited his editing to condensing (which inevitably works to alter what the author may have intended, as anyone who has been condensed knows), changing only some of the place names, which may or may not have seemed a logical response to the work of the man who wrote "There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity."

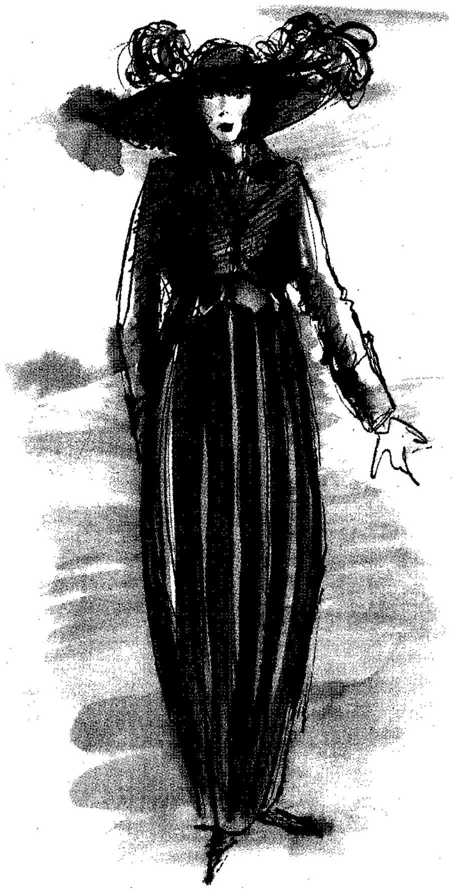
This question of what should be done with what a writer leaves unfinished goes back, and is conventionally answered by citing works we might have lost had the dying wishes of their authors been honored. Virgil's Aeneid is mentioned. Franz Kafka's "The Trial" and "The Castle" are mentioned. In 1951, clearly shadowed by mortality, Hemingway judged that certain parts of a long four-part novel on which he had been working for a number of years were sufficiently "finished" to be published after his death, and specified his terms, which did not include the intrusion of any editorial hand and specifically excluded the publication of the unfinished first section. "The last two parts need no cutting at all," he wrote to Charles Scribner in 1951. "The third part needs quite a lot but it is very careful scalpel work and would need no cutting if I were dead. . . . The reason that I wrote you that you could always publish the last three parts separately is because I know you can in case through accidental death or any sort of death I should not be able to get the first part in proper shape to publish."

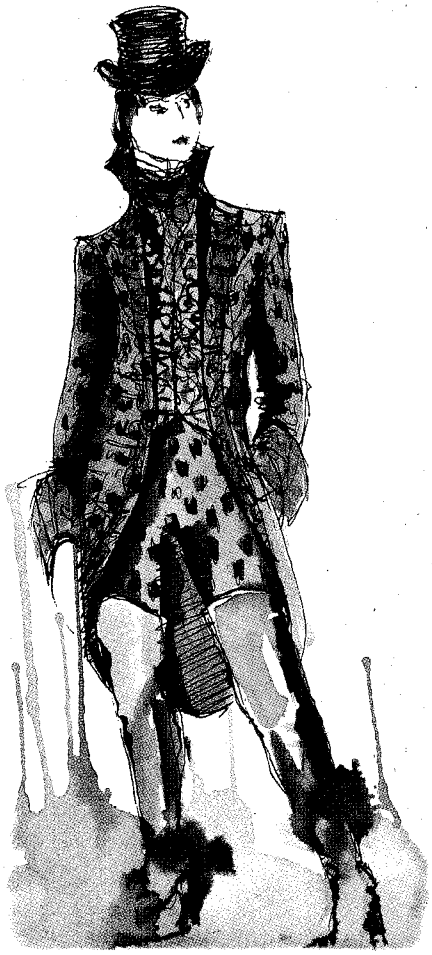
Hemingway himself, the following year, published the fourth part of this manuscript separately, as "The Old Man and the Sea." The "first part" of the manuscript, the part not yet "in proper shape to publish," was, after his death, nonetheless published, as part of "Islands in the Stream." In the case of the "African novel," or "True at First

"Why, these are nothing but a lot of tax-and-spend proposals!"

Light," eight hundred and fifty pages reduced by half by someone other than their author can go nowhere the author intended them to go, but they can provide the occasion for a chat-show hook, a faux controversy over whether the part of the manuscript in which the writer on safari takes a Wakamba bride does or does not reflect a "real" event. The increasing inability of many readers to construe fiction as anything other than roman à clef, or the raw material of biography, is both indulged and encouraged. The New York *Times*, in its announcement of the publication of the manuscript, quoted Patrick Hemingway to this spurious point: " 'Did Ernest Hemingway have such an experience?' he said from his home in Bozeman, Mont. 'I can tell you from all I know—and I don't know everything—he did not.' "

This is a denial of the idea of fiction, just as the publication of unfinished work is a denial of the idea that the role of the writer in his or her work is to make it. Those excerpts from "True at First Light" already published can be read only as something not yet made, notes, scenes in the process of being set down, words set down but not yet written. There are arresting glimpses here and there, fragments shored against what the writer must have seen as his ruin, and a sympathetic reader might well believe it possible that had the writer lived (which is to say had the writer found the will and energy and memory and concentration) he might have shaped the material, written it into being, made it work as the story the glimpses suggest, that of a man returning to a place he loved and finding himself at three in the morning confronting the knowledge that he is no longer the person who loved it and will never now be the person he had meant to be. But of course such a possibility would have been in the end closed to this particular writer, for he had already written that story, in 1936, and called it "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." "Now he would never write the things that he had saved to write until he knew enough to write them well," the writer in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" thought as he lay dying of gangrene in Africa. And then, this afterthought, the saddest story: "Well, he would not have to fail at trying to write them either." ♦





BEHIND THE SCENES

SILVER AND GOLD

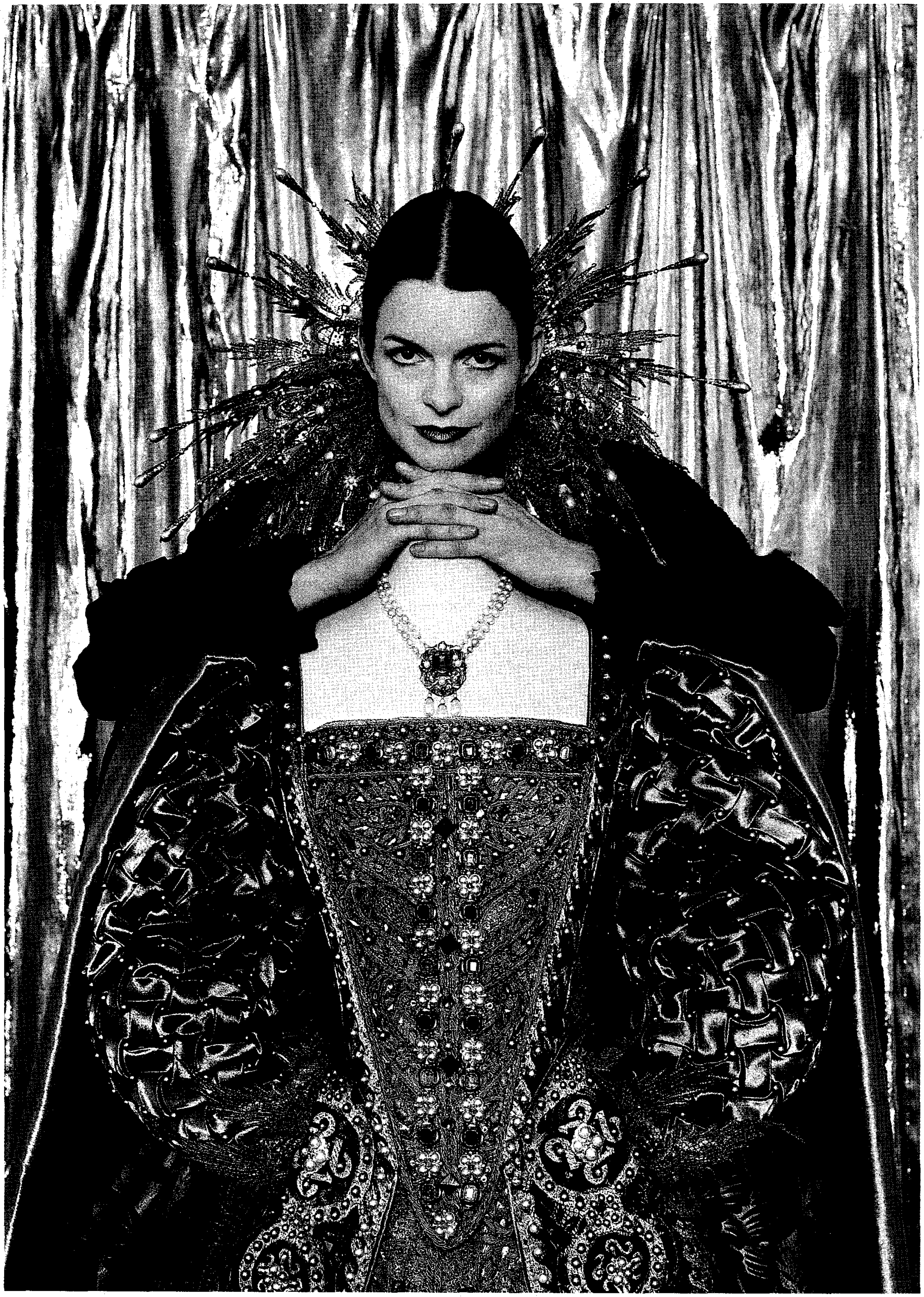
In a book called "The Fashion Makers," I have always been drawn to Barbara Walz's photograph of the legendary Hollywood designer Edith Head carrying a tulle dress she had created for Elizabeth Taylor in "A Place in the Sun." Although the movie had been released many years before the picture was taken, it is impossible to see that dress without recalling the nineteen-year-old Liz encouraging Montgomery Clift to "tell Mama all" in a close two-shot. This was the photograph that made me realize the transporting effect of costume design in film.

Some of the most spectacular movie costumes of recent years have been created by the thirty-eight-year-old British designer Sandy Powell, whose work has little relationship to the way things look now. Her designs for the avant-garde director Derek Jarman's "Edward II" and "Caravaggio," for Sally Potter's gorgeous film of "Orlando," and for Iain Softley's version of "The Wings of the Dove" (top left) say a great deal about Powell's ability to marry the past to this very contemporary medium. Her rich color sense and her reliance on densely patterned fabrics provide historical characters with a sense of mystery while also revealing something of their inner lives.

These talents are put to excellent use in Todd Haynes's new film, "Velvet Goldmine." Set in London's glam-rock scene of the nineteen-seventies—when wearing tight polyester pants and ruffled shirts (bottom left) was merely a prelude to wearing nothing but a little blue eyeshadow and stumbling into bed—the movie may open Powell up to the most careful scrutiny of her career, since many of the genre's fans are still alive and kicking in their silver space boots. She embraces glam rock's artificiality with outfits that recall the era's icons, such as David Bowie, Iggy Pop, and Edgar Winter. In fact, a number of designers have been inspired by the movie's look to go glam this season, which is one indication of success in the fashion world: when your work is ripped off but called an inspiration.

—Hilton Als

OPPOSITE: CPI



The costume designer Sandy Powell, with one of her creations from "Shakespeare in Love." Photograph by Polly Borland.

FICTION

BIRDLAND

The ineluctable rules of migration.

BY MICHAEL KNIGHT

BETWEEN the months of April and September, Pawtucket, Rhode Island, is inhabited by several generations of a particular African parrot. A millionaire philanthropist named Elgin Archibald brought a dozen or so over from Kenya around the turn of the century and kept them in an aviary built against the side of his house. A few days before his death, in 1907, in a moment more notable for generosity than for good sense, he swung open the cage and released the birds into a wide summer sky. According to eyewitness reports, the parrots, surprised by their sudden freedom, made a dazed circle beneath the clouds and, not seeing anything more to their liking, lighted amid the branches of an apple orchard on the back acreage of Archibald's property. There, following the habit of nature, they flourished, and have continued to thrive for more than ninety years. But in September, when winter creeps in from the ocean and cold air evokes hazy instincts, the parrots flee south for warmer climes and settle here in Elbow, Alabama, along a slow bend in the Black Warrior River, where perhaps they are reminded of waters, slower still, in an almost forgotten continent across the sea.

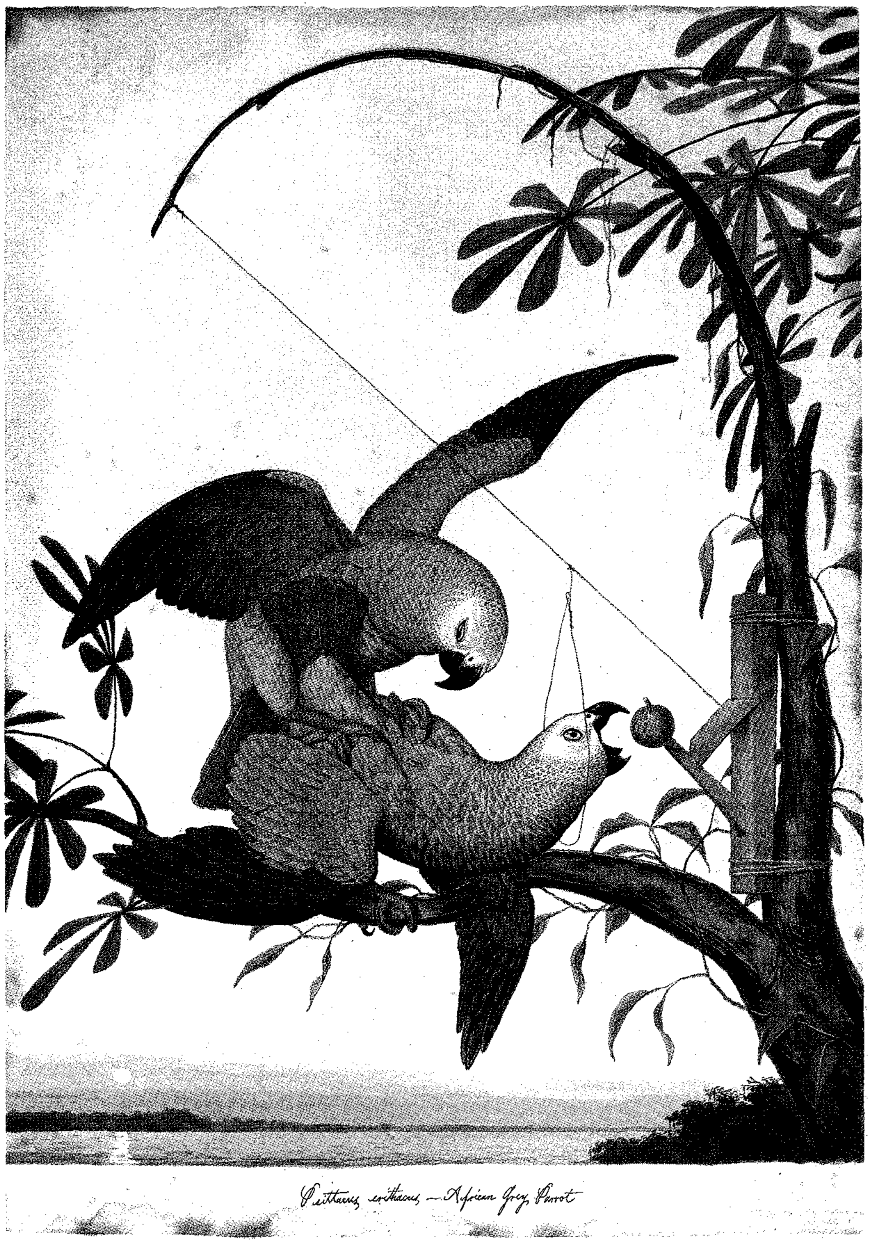
I know all this because the Blonde told me it was true. The Blonde has platinum hair and round hips, and a pair of ornithology degrees from a university up in New Hampshire. She has a given name, as well, Ludmilla Haggarsdottir, but no one in town is comfortable with its pronunciation. The Blonde came to Elbow a year ago, researching a book about Archibald's parrots, and was knocked senseless by the late-August heat. Even after the weight had gone out of summer and the parrots had arrived and football was upon us, she staggered around in a safari hat and sunglasses, drunk with the fading season, scribbling notes on the progress of the birds. She took pictures and sat sweating in the live-oak shade. They don't have this sort of heat in New England—bone-warming inertial heat, humidity thick enough to slow your blood. She rented a room in my house, the only room for rent in town. At night, we would sit on the back porch, fireflies blundering against the screen, and make love on my grandmother's old daybed. "Tell me a story, Raymond," the Blonde would say. "Tell me something I've never heard before." The fireflies glowed like cigarette embers. The Blonde was slick with perspiration.

"This," I said, throwing her leg over my shoulder, "is how Hector showed his love to Andromache the night before Achilles killed him dead."

ELBOW, ALABAMA, is easy enough to find. Take Highway 14 north from Sherwood until you come to Easy Money Road. Bear east and keep driving until you're sure you've gone too far: past a red barn with the words "HIS DESIRE SHALL BE SATISFIED UPON THE HILLS OF GILEAD" painted on the planks in gold letters, past a field where no crops grow, past a cypress split by lightning. This is modest country, and nature has had her steady way for years. My house is just a little farther, over a hill, left on the gravel drive.

The only TV around here sits on the counter at Dillard's Country Store. Dillard's has a gas pump out front and all the essentials inside: white bread and yellow mustard and cold beer. Dillard himself brews hard cider, and doubles as mayor of Elbow. He is eighty-one years old and has been elected to eleven consecutive terms. On fall Saturdays, all Elbow gathers in his store to watch the Alabama team take the field: me and the Blonde, Mayor Dillard, Lookout Mountain Coley, the Foot brothers, and Mae and Wilson Camp, who have a soybean farm north of town. Lookout Mountain Coley is the nearest thing we have to a local celebrity. He grew up in Mentone, Alabama, near the mountain with that name. These days, Lookout stocks shelves and does the bookkeeping in the grocery and mans the counter when the Mayor is in the head, but thirty-five years ago he was only the second black man to play football for the great Bear Bryant. Once, he returned a punt ninety-nine yards for a touchdown against Tennessee. The Crimson Tide is not what it used to be, of course, and we all curse God for taking away our better days. Leonard and Chevy Foot, identical twins, have the foulest mouths in Elbow, and their dialogue on game day is a long string of invective against blind referees and unfair recruiting practices and dumb-ass coaches who aren't fit to wipe Bear Bryant's behind. The parrots perch in pecan trees beyond the open windows and listen to us rant. At night, with the river curving silently, they mimic us in the dark. *"Catch the ball,"* they caw in Mayor Dillard's desperate tones. *"Catch the ball, you stupid nigger."* Mayor Dillard is an unrepentant racist, and I often wonder what the citizens of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, must think when the birds leave us in the spring.

When I was fourteen, Hurricane Frederick whipped in from the Gulf of Mexico, spinning tornadoes upriver as far as Elbow. Dillard's Country Store was pancaked, and a sixty-foot pine fell across the roof of my grandmother's house. My father had been gone almost a year, and we huddled in the pantry, the old woman and I, and listened to the wind moving room to room like a search party. The next day she sent me to town on foot to borrow supplies and see if everyone was all right. Telephone poles were stacked along the road like pick-up-sticks. But the most terrifying thing was the quiet. The parrots were gone, the trees without pigment and voice. We thought they had all been killed, and to this day no one is certain where they spent the winter, though the Blonde has unearthed testimony for her book regarding strange birds sighted in the panhandle of Florida during the last months of 1979. We rebuilt the grocery, and my grandmother turned her roof repairs into a party, serving up cheese and crackers and a few bottles of champagne she'd saved from her wedding. Despite our efforts at good cheer, and exempting New Year's Day, when Bear Bryant licked Joe Paterno in the Sugar Bowl, a pall hung over town until Lookout spotted the birds coming back, dozens of them coloring the sky like a ticker-tape parade.


Psittacus erithacus — African Grey Parrot

"I want to teach the birds a phrase so full of magic that the Blonde will never leave."

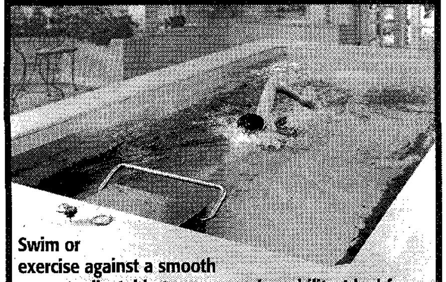
WALTON FORD, COURTESY PAUL KASMIN GALLERY

Our river is named for the Indian chief Tuscaloosa, which means "Black Warrior" in Choctaw, and in the fall, while we sit mesmerized and enraged by the failings of our team, its dark water litters Dillard Point with driftwood and detritus—baby carriages and coat hangers, Goodyear radials and headless Barbie dolls. When the game has ended and I need an hour to collect myself, I wander the riverbank, picking up branches that I later carve into parrot shapes and display in the window of Dillard's Country Store. We have bird-watchers by the busload in season and, outside of the twenty dollars a month I charge the Blonde for her room and board, these whitlings account for my income. But I don't need much in the way of money anymore.

The Blonde doesn't understand our commitment to college football. Ever the scientist, she has theorized that a winning team gives us a reason to take pride in being from Alabama, after our long history of bigotry and oppression, and our more recent dismal record in public education and environmental conservation. I don't know whether she is correct, but I suspect that she is beginning to recognize the appeal of the Crimson Tide. Just last week, while we watched Alabama in a death struggle with the Florida Gators, our halfback fumbled on their twenty-yard line and she jerked out of her chair, her fists closed tight, her thighs quivering beneath her hiking shorts. She had to clench her jaw to keep from calling out. Her face was glazed with sweat, the fine hairs on her upper lip visible in the dusty light. The sight of her like that, all balled-up enthusiasm, her shirt knotted beneath her ribs, sweat pooling in the folds of her belly, moved me to dizziness. I held her hand and led her out onto the porch. Dillard's is situated at a junction of rural highways, and we watched a tour bus rumble past, eager old women hanging from the windows with binoculars at their eyes. The pecan trees were dotted with parrots, blurs of brighter red and smears of gray in among the leaves. "*Catch the ball!*" one of the parrots called out, and another answered, "*Stick him like a man, you fat country bastard.*" She sat on the plank steps, and I knelt at her bare feet. "Will you marry me?" I said. "You are a prize greater than Helen to Paris." The Blonde is not the only one around here with a college education.

She looked at me sadly for a minute, her hand going clammy in mine. The game was back on inside, an announcer's voice floating through the open door. After a while, she said, "I can't live here the rest of my life." She stood and went inside to watch the end of the game, which we lost on a last-second Hail Mary pass that broke all our hearts at once.

The Blonde is still working on her book. She follows the birds from tree to tree, keeping an eye on reproductive habits and the condition of winter plumage. "Parrot," she tells me, is really



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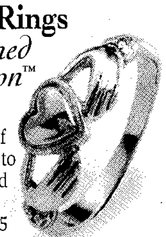

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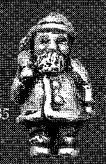

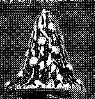

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just a catchall name for several types of bird, such as the macaw, the cockatoo, the lory, and the budgerigar. Common to all genera, including our African grays, are a hooked bill, a prehensile tongue, and yoke-toed claws, whatever that means. The African parrot can live up to eighty years, she says, and often mates for life, though our local birds have apparently adapted a more swinging sexual culture, perhaps from an instinctive understanding of the necessity of perpetuation in a nonindigenous environment. Her book will be about the insistence of nature. It will be about surviving against the odds.

By the time April came along and the birds began to filter north, the Blonde and I were too tangled up for her to leave. One day, the Blonde says, she will return to Pawtucket and resume her studies there. She mentions this when she is angry with me for one reason or another, and leads me to her room to show me her suitcase, still standing unpacked beside my grandmother's antique bureau. And the thought of her leaving does frighten me into good behavior. I can hardly remember what my life was like without her here, though I managed fine for a long time before she arrived.

The Blonde won't sleep a whole night with me. She climbs up the drop ladder to the attic, which is where I make my bed, and we wind together in the dark, her body pale above me, moonlight catching in her movie-star hair. When she is finished, she smokes cigarettes at the gable window, and I tell her stories from the Iliad. I explain how the Greeks almost lost everything when Achilles and Agamemnon argued over a woman. I tell her that male pride is a volatile energy, and that some feathers are better left unruffled, but I know she only listens to these old stories for the sound of my voice. She is more interested in the parrots, a few of whom have taken roost in an oak tree beside my house. If there is a full moon, the birds are awake for hours, calling, "*Who are you? Why are you in my house?*" back and forth in the luminous night. According to the Blonde's research, old Archibald was deep in Alzheimer's by the time of his death and was unable to recognize his own children when they visited. She goes dreamy-eyed imagining the parrots passing these words from generation to generation. Before she returns to her bed, she wonders aloud how it is that the birds could have learned such existential phrases in Rhode Island and such ugly, bitter words down here.

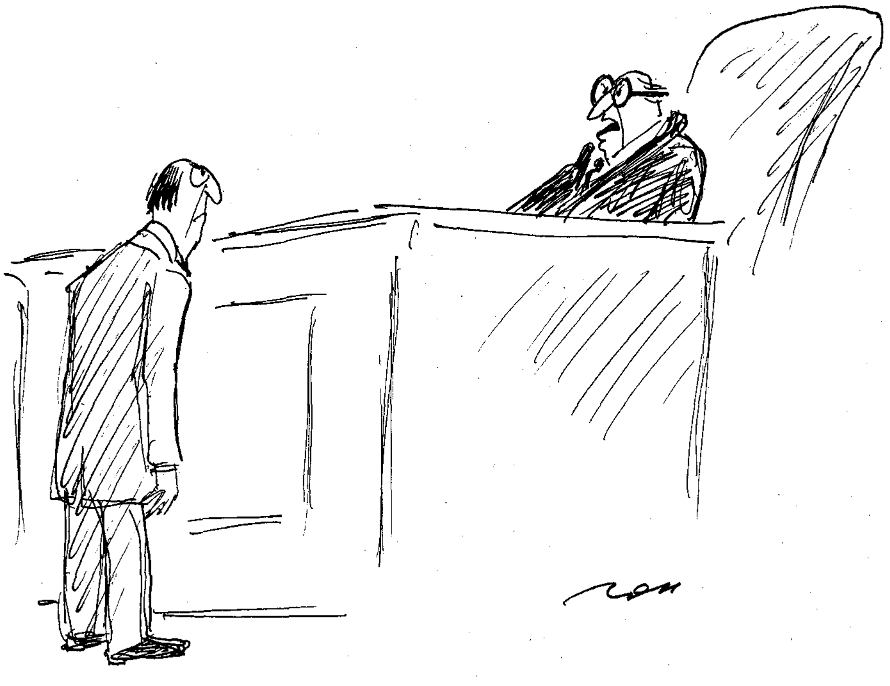
Sometimes Lookout Coley gets fed up with Mayor Dillard shouting "nigger" at the TV screen. Having played for Alabama in the halcyon sixties, Lookout knows what football means to people around here, and he restrains himself admirably. But when they were younger men and Mayor Dillard crossed whatever invisible boundary exists between them Lookout would circle his fists in the old style and challenge him to a fight. A couple of times they ended up rolling around in the dirt parking lot, sweat running muddy on their skin. Nowadays Lookout presses his lips together and his face goes blank and hard as if he were turning himself to stone. He walks outside without a word and stares off at the trees across the highway. After a few minutes, Mayor Dillard gets up and follows him. The rest of us focus our attention on the game, so they can have some time alone to sort things out. No one knows for sure what goes on between them, but when they return they are patting each other on the back and making promises that neither of them will keep. Each time, Mayor Dillard offers a public apology, saying he hopes the people of Elbow won't hold this incident against him come election. He buys a round of bottled beers and Lookout accepts the apology with grace, waving his beer at the TV screen so we'll quit looking at him and keep our minds on simpler things.

Her first season in town, the Blonde was appalled by these displays. She is descended from liberal-minded Icelandic stock and she couldn't understand why Lookout or any of us would allow Mayor Dillard to go on the way he does. Once she sprang to her feet and clicked off the television and delivered an angry lecture welcoming us to the "twentieth fucking century." Her fury was gorgeous. She tried to convince Lookout to report Dillard to the N.A.A.C.P. or, short of that, to run for mayor himself, arguing that only a sports celebrity would have the clout to unseat an old incumbent. But Lookout told her he wasn't interested. Though she would never admit it, the words don't offend her so much anymore. You can get used to anything, given time. Some nights, however, when she is moving violently over me, she grits her teeth and says, "Who's the nigger, Raymond? Who's the nigger now?" I don't think her indignation is aimed directly at me. When she has gone, I tangle myself sleeplessly in the sheets and promise never to think another closed-minded thought.

RAYMOND FRENCH was my father's name, now mine. I am the only child of a land surveyor. My mother died giving birth to me, and my dad began to wander farther and farther afield, finding work, until one day he never returned. I was thirteen when he went, left here with my grandmother and the house. She paid for my education, but she was always disappointed with my chosen field of study. "Classics, Raymond?" she would say. "You ought to be studying the future." She loved this town and hoped that I would bring my learning home and give something back. But all I have given unto Elbow is driftwood parrots and the Blonde. Everyone knows she lingers here because of me, and no one is quite sure how they feel about that.

A few days ago, I panicked when I returned from Dillard Point and found an empty house. I waited on the porch and watched the road for cars, but she didn't show. I don't have a phone, so I drove from house to house, stopped by to see Lookout, swung past the Foots' mobile home, whipped the town into a posse. Prowling country lanes, I began to suspect that she was gone for good. Then I spotted her jeep parked beside one of the Camps' fields. This deserted road and vacant field are like horror-movie sets, with a defunct grain silo rising from the ground like a wizard's tower. I called her name, but only the parrots answered. "*Who are you*?" they said, their voices flat and distant. "*Catch the ball.*" Then, faintly, I heard her voice, a stage whisper coming from inside the silo, and when I crawled up beside her she shone a flashlight on a nest, so I could see the baby parrots, their feathers still slick and insufficient, heads wobbly on their necks. She threw her arms around me and wept and pressed her lips against my collarbone. The roof of the silo had fallen in years before and stars blossomed in the open space.

One Saturday in the fall and one in spring, the town celebrates Parrot Day. In October, Mayor Dillard stands outside the store, where Lookout has rigged a hand-painted banner, delivers a short speech, and has his picture snapped for the record. He always ar-



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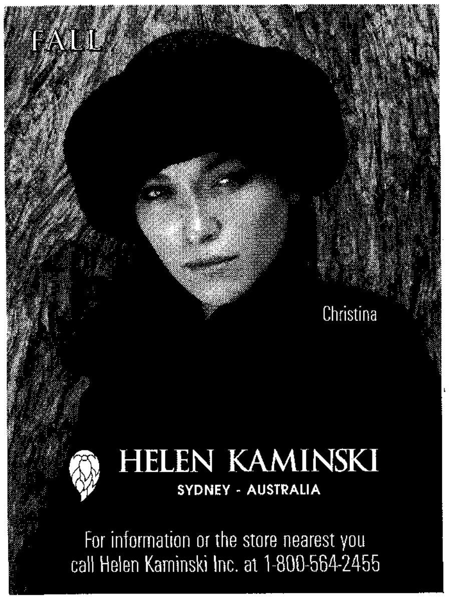
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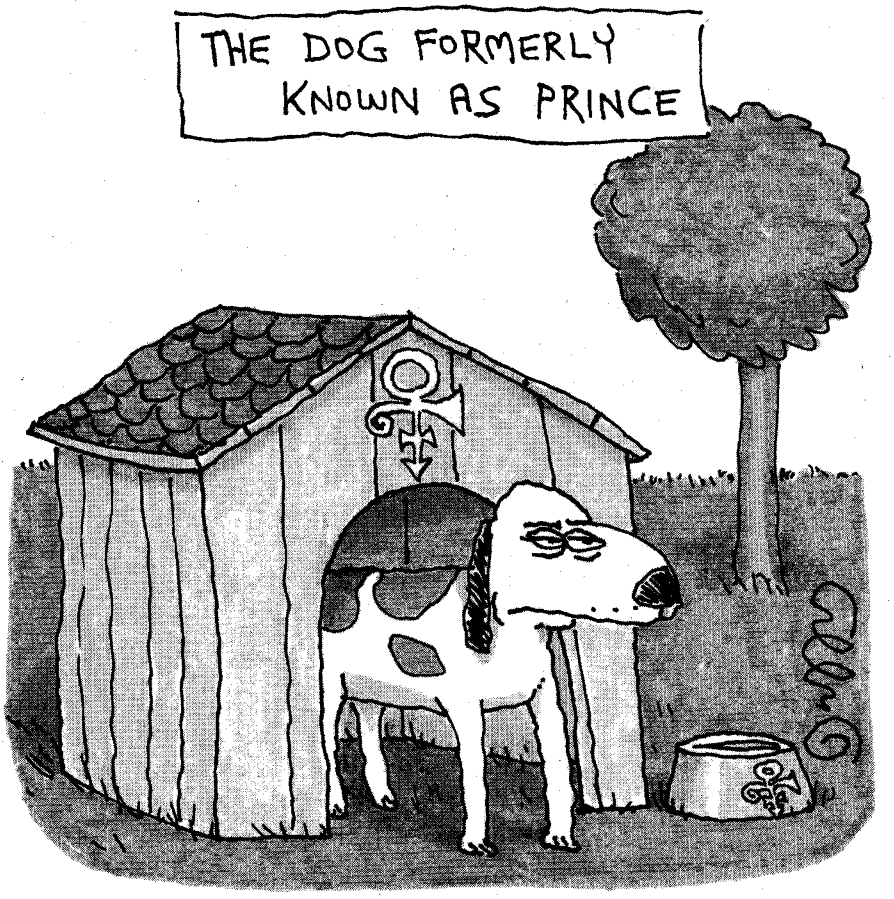
THE DOG FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE

ranges it so that Parrot Day comes during an off week for the Crimson Tide. This year, we gather in the parking lot and listen to the Mayor give his speech. The parrots jeer him from the trees. *"Run, darkie, run,"* they call, and he pretends not to notice. The Blonde is disappointed with the day. She wants more from these proceedings, wants something meaningful and real, but this year most of us are grateful for a break from football. Six games into the season and already we've lost four. Another stinker and 'Bama is out of contention for a bowl. We'd settle for anything at this point—the Jeep Aloha, the Outback Steakhouse, even the Poulan Weedeater Bowl, over in Louisiana.

ALL our mail is addressed to Dillard's Country Store, and in the evenings, when the sun is like molten glass over the river, Mayor Dillard hands out our letters and such. Once a month, the Foots hang their heads in a stew of shame because their subscription to *Titty* has arrived. The Camps get postcards now and then from Wilson's brother Max and his other brother, Andre, whose marriage broke up years ago. Lookout gets religious pamphlets and sports-recruiting news, but letters never come for me. I no longer have connections beyond the boundaries of our town. The Blonde dawdles nearby when Mayor Dillard passes out the mail, her hair sweat-damp against her neck. She cracks her knuckles and goes for nonchalance. She has, it seems, applied for a government grant. She wrote the proposal without telling me and will head north in the spring if her funding comes through. We are sitting at a picnic table behind my house eating peanut-butter sandwiches when she announces her intentions. I force down a mouthful and ask her for a second time to marry me, but her answer is the same. She covers my hand with hers, and sends a look of apology across the table. The Blonde holds all history against me. When it is clear that I have nothing else to say, she stands and walks around to the front of the house. I find her staring up into the trees at a pair of fornicating parrots. "Don't mistake this for love," I hear her murmur to the birds. "Don't be talked into something you'll regret." She watches, unblinking, her arms crossed at her chest. I ask her why she stayed last spring, why she didn't follow the parrots when they left Elbow for the season. She tells me she was broke, that's all. She would have vanished if she'd had the cash. I remind her that she paid her rent, that she was never short of cigarettes and oils for her hair. "Shut up," the Blonde says. "I know what you want to hear."

At night, she types her notes and files them away on the chance the government will write. It's warm enough still, even in October, that we can leave the windows open, air grazing her skin and carrying her scent to my chair in the next room. There is something familiar about the way she smells, though I can never place it. I whittle and listen to sports radio and wish I had a phone so I could call all the broadcasters in New Jersey who have forgotten how great we used to be, how we won a dozen National Championships, and how Alabama lost only six games in the first ten years of my life. To listen to them talk, you'd think they never heard that Bear Bryant was on a U.S. thirty-two-cent stamp. I pace the floor when I get agitated and shuffle wood shavings with my feet. I talk back to my grandmother's Motorola portable. When I make the fierce turn toward my chair, I see the Blonde standing in the doorway, her hands on the frame above her. She smiles and shakes her head. "You people," she says. "When are you gonna put all that Bear Bryant stuff behind you? That's all dead and gone." I cross myself Catholic style and look at her a long moment, my heart tiny in my chest. She is wearing a man's sleeveless undershirt and boxer shorts, her hair pinned behind her head with a pencil. I would forgive her almost any sacrilege for the length of her neck or the way she rests one foot on top of the other and curls her painted toes. I remember Calypso casting a spell on the Greeks to keep Odysseus on her island, and I want to teach the birds a phrase so full of magic that the Blonde will never leave.

I want to tell her that the past is not only for forgetting. There are some things, good and bad, that you can't leave behind. According to the record books, Bear Bryant didn't sign a black player until 1970 because the State of Alabama was not ready even for gridiron integration. A decade earlier, however, he had recruited a group of Negro running backs who were light-skinned enough to pass for white. They hid their faces beneath helmets and bunked in a special dorm miles away from campus. They were listed in the program under names Bear himself selected. Lookout's playing name was Patrick O'Reilly.

Every now and then, Mayor Dillard will set up his ancient reel-to-reel projector on a card table outdoors and, against the rear wall of his store, show black-and-white movies of Lookout's punt return. We sit in the grass in the early dark, pressing beer bottles against our necks to ward off the heat, and watch his image shimmering and breaking around chips in the paint. There is Lookout, sleek and muscled and young, with the punt dropping into his arms. He shifts his hips side to side and gives a Tennessee defender a stiff-arm that takes your breath away. The image flickers as he shimmies toward the sideline, and then he breaks upfield, his back arched with speed, the rest of the world falling away behind him. The movie is without sound, and whenever Mayor Dillard rewinds the film, so we can watch the touchdown over and over, Lookout goes streaking backward in front of the Alabama bench, past his exultant teammates and granite-faced Bear Bryant, then forward again toward the end zone, all swift and silent grace. None of us have ever done anything so wonderful in all our lives. Chevy Foot, as if witnessing a cosmic event, whispers, "Old Number Forty-one, man, you sure could fly."

I ASK the Blonde why the parrots keep returning to Elbow, and she says it's instinct. We are sitting on the riverbank, with our feet in the water. It's morning on another football Saturday. Downstream, a hot-air balloon hovers on invisible currents in the sky. The Blonde slips into her academic's voice as she tells me that, because the birds are native to equatorial Africa, because their food supply of seeds, nuts, and fruit dries up in the Rhode Island cold, they are obliged to embark on a southerly migration in order to survive.

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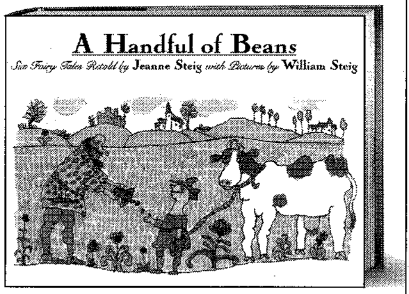
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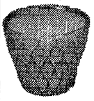

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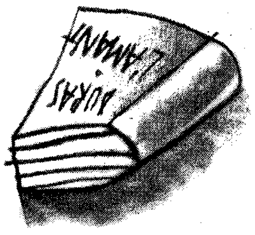
"It's a miracle *Psittacus erithacus* endures in this country at all," she says, and lies back on the ground, crossing her hands behind her head. There is a parrot perched on a cypress branch across the river watching us with the side of his head. I find a stone on the bank and skip it across the water in his direction, and he screeches and flutters his wings at me.



"But why here?" I say. "They could live anywhere in the world." The Blonde lifts up on her forearm, her hair falling over her eyes, and opens her mouth to speak before she realizes that for once she doesn't have an answer to my question.

In the second quarter of the Ole Miss game, a freshman quarterback named Algernon Marquez comes off the bench for Alabama and throws a pair of touchdowns before the half. For nine minutes, as our team works to tie the score, we are beside ourselves, leaping about Dillard's Country Store, pitching our bodies into one another's arms, but at halftime we fall silent, fearing a jinx, and cross our fingers and apologize to God for all the nasty things we have said about Him in the recent past. Even the Blonde wants to bear the suspense in quiet. She carries her cigarettes outside and sits smoking in her jeep. I stand behind my parrot sculptures, and watch her through the window, as she pretends she is above all this.

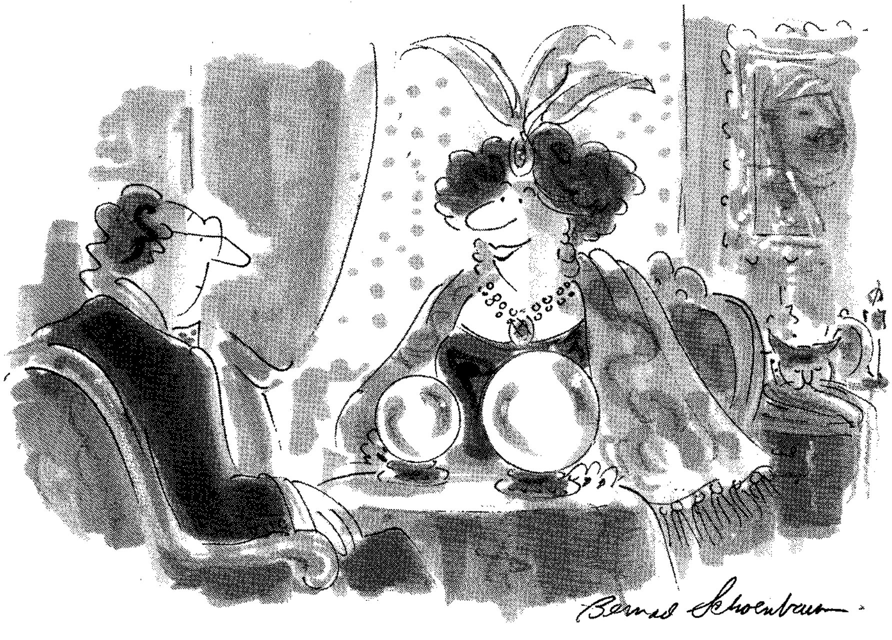
The second half, God bless, belongs to Alabama. Our defense is inspired, our offense fleet and strong. Algernon Marquez isn't Joe Namath or even Snake Stabler, but he is more a dream than we could have hoped. "A no-name wonder from Boulahatchie," the announcer says, "whose only goal in life was to play for the Crimson Tide." I wonder how it would feel to have achieved all your aspirations by your eighteenth year. I wonder what Lookout would say about that. A busful of Delaware parrot lovers rolls up while the score is 35–17, and Mayor Dillard gives them whatever they want for free.

That night, I tell the Blonde Andromache's story—how she was made a slave to Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, after Hector's death, but grew to love him a little bit, over time. "She was happy there, even though she never guessed it could be true," I say, sitting on the bed, with my back propped up. We are in her bed now, my grandmother's sleigh bed, which has been in our family since the Revolutionary War; it made the journey down here by wagon from Virginia. The Blonde is on her back, with her feet against the wall beside my head. She is naked, still flushed from our coupling. "I'm pregnant," she says. "I can feel it in my bones." She traces concentric circles on her stomach with a finger, the parrots frantic beyond the windows. Then she sits upright and looks at me, as if she wanted to see something behind my eyes. I'm just about to haul her into my arms and waltz her joyously around her room when she slaps my face, leaving an echo in my head. I watch, too stunned to stop her, while she jumps up and down on the wood floor, landing hard and flat-footed each time, shaking windowpanes, sending ripples along the backs of her legs. She is crying and pounding her knees, and I wrap my arms around her and pin her down. "This is not my baby," she says. "This is not my life." She keeps shouting until her voice is gone, and she cries herself to sleep beneath me.

Morning finds me alone, still sleeping on the floor. I check the house to be sure, but she is nowhere to be found. Her suitcase is gone from beside the bureau, her hair-care products have vanished from the shelf beside the bathroom sink. I sit drinking coffee on the sleeping porch while the parrots call softly, "*Who are you? Why are you in my house?*" It is not quite a new day yet, and I watch the world come to life, winter buds opening in the light, the river far below hauling water toward the sea. I tell myself that I will give up hope at lunch. And though I hold off eating until two o'clock, I keep my promise and carry a melancholy peanut-butter sandwich out into the yard. The grass is cool on the bottoms of my feet. I wonder about the Blonde, see her streaming down the highway in her jeep, sunglasses on her head to keep the hair out of her eyes. I wonder if she will put an end to our baby in a clinic or if she only wants to get some distance between history and the child. I want to tell her that even bland Ohio is haunted by its crimes. I want to tell her, with the air full of birds like this and the shadow of my house still lingering on the yard, that she is exactly what I need. Behind me, as if on cue, the Blonde says, "I drove all night, but I didn't know where else to go." I turn to face her, blood jumping in my veins. There are tired blue crescents under her eyes, and her hair is knotted from the wind. She smiles and smooths the front of her shorts. I am so grateful I do not have the strength to speak. "I took a pee test in Gadsden," she says. "It's official." Then she walks over, grabs my wrist, and guides the sandwich to her lips.

ELECTION DAY is nearing again, November 17th. Though Mayor Dillard will run unopposed, as usual, he is superstitious about complacency. He pays Lookout overtime to haul boxes of campaign buttons out of the storage shed behind his store and stake "Dillard Does It Better" signs along the road. He visits each of his constituents in person, bribing us with hard cider and the promise of a brighter future here in Elbow. Things are looking brighter for the Alabama team as well. We've won two games in a row and the Yankee radio personalities are beginning to see the light. They say our team has an outside shot at the Peach Bowl, over in Georgia, where we will likely face Virginia's Cavaliers. But we do not speak a word of this in town. We hold our breath and say our prayers because hated Auburn is looming in the distance and one false step could bring all this new hope down around us like a house of cards. At night, the Blonde and I drink nonalcoholic beverages beneath the Milky Way. We have reached an acceptable compromise: spring in Rhode Island, fall back here, until she has finished her book, but she will give birth in Alabama. Elbow will have a new voter in eighteen years, and the Blonde has convinced Lookout to contend for mayor himself. He will not run against his friend, Lookout says. Too much has passed between them. But it won't be long before Mayor Dillard gives in to time, and Lookout Coley can sweep injustice from our town like an Old West sheriff.

My life purls drowsily out behind me like water. Parrots preen invisibly in the dark. I shuttle inside for more ice and listen to the Blonde spin stories about our unborn child. Her daughter, she says, will discover a lost tribe of parrots in the wilds of Borneo, and invent a vaccine for broken hearts. She will write a novel so fine that no other books need writing anymore, and she will marry, if she chooses, an imperfect man and make him good inside. And maybe, if the stars are all in line, our daughter will grow up to be the hardest-hitting free safety who ever lived. ♦



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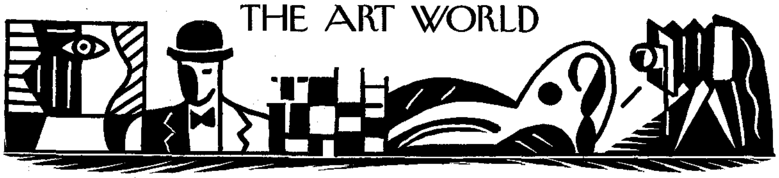

FAIRIES WELCOME

The Victorians' uses of enchantment.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

TAKE the word "Victorian" out of "Victorian Fairy Painting," the title of an exhibition at the Frick, and you have a redundancy. All painting is fairy painting: materialized visions of immaterial entities that are possessed of some spirit or another. Even the starkest abstract painting maintains in its rectangle a rule of sorcery by which appearance trumps logic and imagination is common sense. We enjoy that, if we like painting.

Do we like the paintings in this honey-sweet, hemlock-dripping show? We needn't very much, I think, to find them usefully fascinating. Mostly from the mid-nineteenth century, the oils, watercolors, and whatnot, including a toy theatre, memorialize a British craze for gossamer critters which, in the reliable Victorian way, exudes psychosocial wooziness and a positively remorseless will to charm. To be brief about it, this stuff is the living last word in antique twee. And yet it feels right on time for us.

Some of the most interesting younger painters in New York have lately been making figurative, fantasy-driven, small-scale pictures that suggest fairy commando raids on dull convention. I think of John Currin's freakish women and Elizabeth Peyton's swoony rock stars—images that, like conjured fairies, feel born rather strictly of somebody's wish to behold them. This recent work is unsettling in its insolent sexual and curdled sentimental kinks. But then so is Victorian fairy painting, when you get in among the enchanted toadstools and really think about it.

You know which island nation sprouted the toadstools by a prevalent archness that daunts aesthetic contemplation. Britons have rarely taken comfortably to arts that set a premium on self-forgetful sincerity: painting, cooking. Their genius tends toward the self-consciously performative: theatre, gardening. When they picture something, they can't seem to help picturing themselves picturing it, and the result is some species of caricature. (Francis Bacon made a howling spectacle of trying, in vain, to destroy this loop.) As it happens, fairy painting may be defined as a hybrid of theatre and gardening, with a bonus harvest of Anglo-sexual hysteria.

Lewis Carroll claimed to have counted a hundred and sixty-five fairies in the nocturnal garden of the Scotsman Joseph Noël Paton's gaga 1849 "The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania." I love it. Mathematics and mythomania: *echt* Brit. The "Quarrel" parades the surfeits of literary conceit and finicky technique that would make Victorian styles, from Paton's academic folderol to the obsessive scrumptiousness of the Pre-Raphaelites, bugbears of twentieth-century taste. This picture bloats with potted longueurs and facile, showoffy effects. But you know what? It's fun. Let's suspend overeducated judgment for a moment and just gaze.

What are those hundred and sixty-five fairies (I take Dr. Dodgson's word on this) up to? Gambolling, for the most part. Indulging in something like sex, the "something like" being key. The Victorians perfected antisensual nudity: nakedness plus attitude. Attitude puts arousal on hold. Performing erotically, the fairies take no evident note of one another's seductiveness, so sex can't start. It is quite a feat: explicitly orgiastic goings on—shot through with dream and story—that are fit for parlor delectation. Why not be impressed?

Speaking of Pre-Raphaelites, we find in this show the only fairy painting by John Everett Millais: "Ferdinand Lured by Ariel" (1849-50). It presents a stagily tunicked and slippered, little-the-worse-for-shipwreck Ferdinand harking to a naked child of a punkishly green-haired Ariel, who is borne aloft by greenish, batlike, highly uningratiating fairies. With Pre-Raph cloisonné fuss, Millais draws tedious attention to individual blades of grass and to Ferdinand's embroidered footwear. (I mean, so what?) But he conveys a keenly satisfying take on Shakespeare with his scary, malicious Ariel.

"The Tempest" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" came in for heavy illustrating by the fairy painters, and so did motifs from and for ballet. This was the era of hovering sylphs and daintily galumphing Wilis. Then there was opium—the tacit collaborator in John Anster Fitzgerald's paintings of drugged sleepers swarmed by creatures from suburbs of Nod. Not until the late nineteen-sixties would pharmacologically induced hallucination again command such popular prestige. And then there was madness.

Charles Altamont Doyle, the father of Arthur Conan Doyle, died of epilepsy in a lunatic asylum, in 1893. His watercolor-tinted drawings of frolicsome fairies fall short of delighting. They have a mentally hectic, emotionally numbed air that is familiar from the work of latter-day, untaught, often institutionalized artists who are termed Outsiders. To Victorian tastes, Outside was frequently as good as In. Charles had a career—though nothing like that of his brother, the vastly successful fairy painter Richard Doyle, who died at fifty-nine of, it says in the catalogue, apoplexy.

BUT the premier mad painter of Victoria's reign, and perhaps ever, was Richard Dadd, who did his dad in. Having murdered the old man in 1843, Dadd fled to France and was arrested after stabbing a fellow stagecoach passenger while he was on a self-appointed errand to assassinate the Emperor of Austria. He passed two decades in Bedlam, where he was allowed to paint. His pictures are illustrational, in the Victorian vein, but the best of them—notably a talismanic little item from the Tate Gallery, "The Fairy Feller's Master Stroke"—are also as dense and as worrisome as uranium.

Viewed voyeuristically through tangled timothy grasses in a darkling gray-green underbrush, the tiny woodsman

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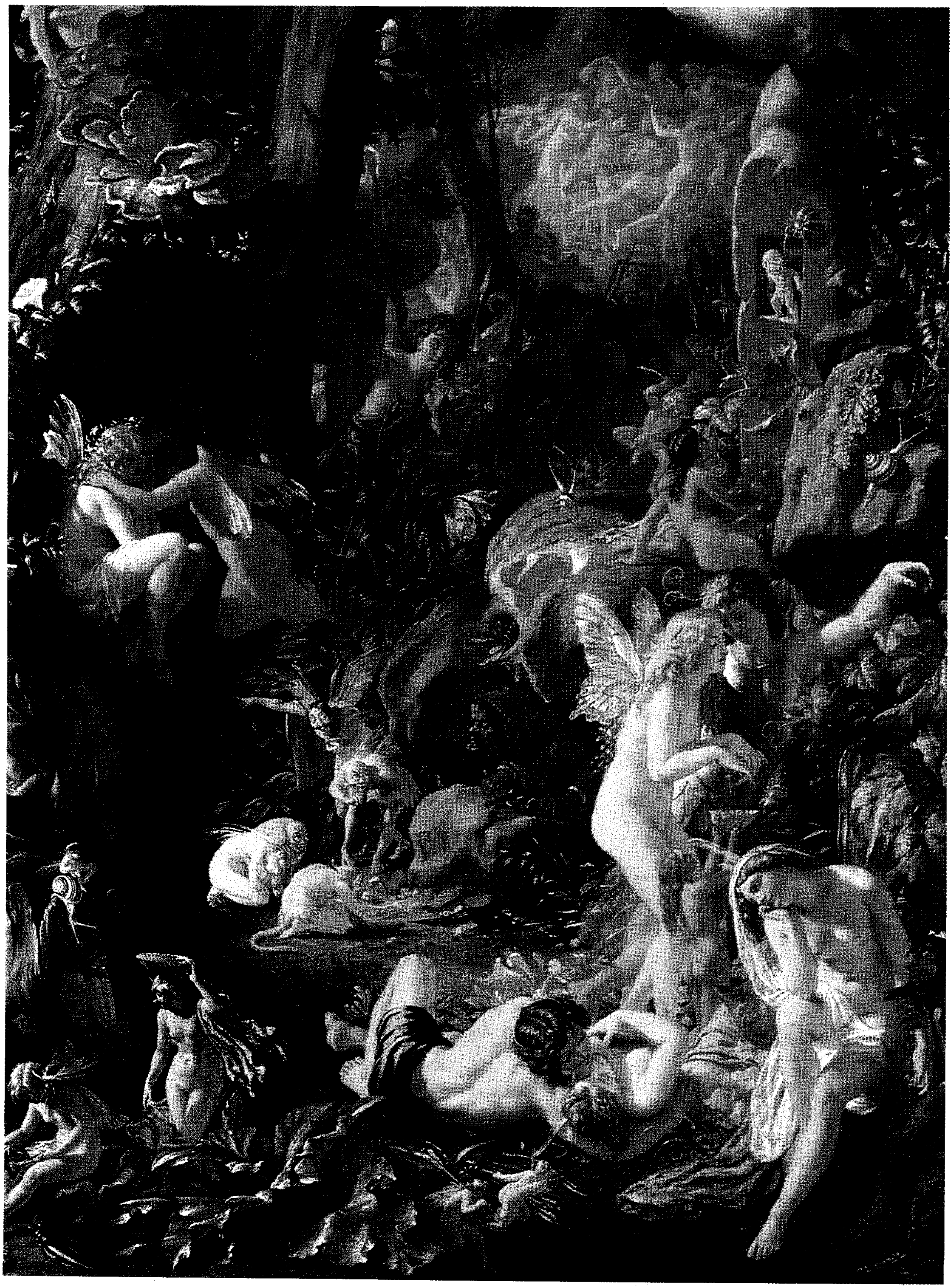

Detail of Joseph Noël Paton's "The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania": Orgiastic goings on with no chance of real sex.

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7 ARCSINE (*ark* + *sign* hom.)
8 OXIDATES (anag.)
9 D + ICE
11 PEPYS (*peeps* hom.)
13 S(A + L'S)A
18 ERIC (anag.; ref. Lassie creator Eric Knight)
19 A + N(C)ESTOR
20 NEW DEAL (*nude* + *eel* hom.)
21 EXTERNAL (anag.)

DOWN

1 EXODUS (anag.)
2 X - A + X + IS
3 TRICK + LE
4 U.S. + AGE
5 (r)ENE + MY
6 (o)DES + K
10 SPAR + TAN
12 SACRAL (anag.)
14 ANNE + X
15 SUEDE (*swayed* hom.)
16 VI(O)LA (ref. Bob Vila of "This Old House")
17 WANE (*Wayne* hom.)

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Feller prepares to axe a hazelnut. Gray-fleshed royals and commoners of a minuscule realm, attended by somewhat lugubrious fairies and a brass band, watch with impassive approval. One needn't be a vulgar Freudian to square this business of busting nuts with Dadd's parricidal rap sheet. Diagnostic readings of art are boring, though, and "The Fairy Feller" does not bore. Looking at it can be a euphoric ordeal.

You keep wanting to turn the lights up, for starters. I suppose that Dadd had moonlight in mind, but the leaden illumination hints at something rarer, maybe a solar eclipse. Details we don't care about, like some daisies, glow lividly, while significant figures founder in murk. The difficulty of seeing feels symbolic of a deeper malaise: a difficulty of being. The Feller is set to strike. It is O.K. for him to strike. The sinisterly glamorous moment tingles with held-breath tension. Nothing happens.

The painting is remarkably ugly. Dadd's nine years of labor on it left a surface untempting to the touch. His fairies are plainly the spawn less of air than of soil: Calibanettes. But the picture's very grotesquerie guarantees its appeal to contemporary sensibilities. It bespeaks invisible things that someone needed very badly to make visible.

Painting is the medium of the need to see. It is also a medium of the hand, which is the organic emblem of individuality and sincerity. When you paint, your hand distills matter from the rest of you—senses, brain, heart, guts, soul. Modern art doted on the distilling process while suppressing interest in you, me, or anybody else in particular. Modern art was impersonal. Today, with fairies in our faces, we recognize ever more strongly that modern art is over.

What now? Not so-called post-modernism—a modern-type shibboleth if ever there was one. For a while, at least, the future of art returns to the hands of artists, whose thoroughly personal quirks and yens—the bases of our trust in them—will govern a search for new visual pleasures and meanings. From art today, we crave discriminations as specific as, say, the difference between an elf and a goblin—and between this elf here and that elf there. Artists who prove to be bewitched in exact, novel, and persuasive ways will lead us on. ♦

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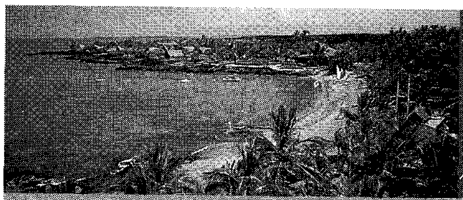

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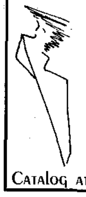

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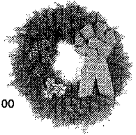

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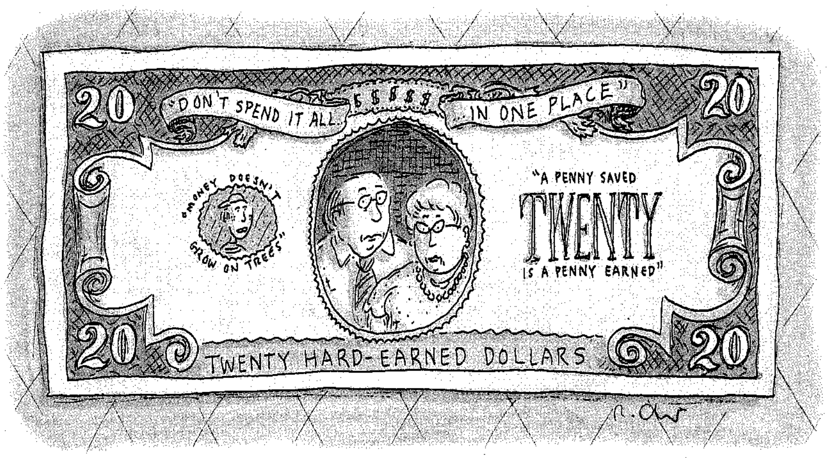
A CRITIC AT LARGE

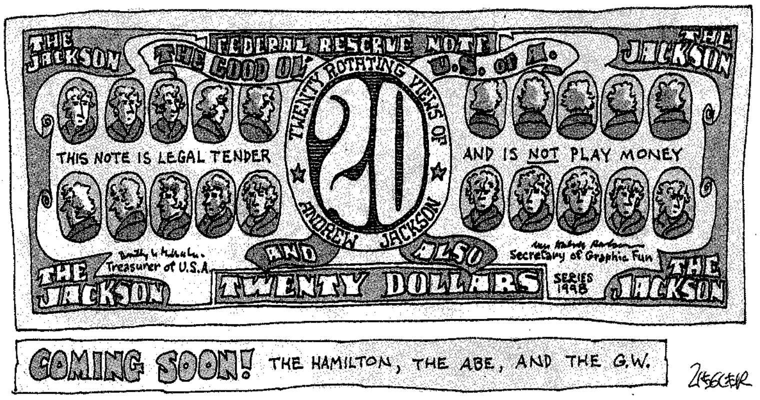
METAMONEY

Why the new big bills—anxious and empty—are perfect for our age.

BY ADAM GOPNIK

THE New Money, like the New Testament, or the New Coke, would like to be seen as the fulfillment of the fine old thing that came before. Same good green-and-black color scheme, same noble statesmen, same cryptic serial numbers, same signature from the entirely unknown Treasurer of the entire country, Mary Ellen—"Withrow," is it? (In Student Council votes in junior high, wasn't it always the girl who had just moved to town, the girl no one knew, who got the treasurer's job?) Same great seal, same government buildings, though we do see the other side of the White House. Even the same piece of hidden American poetry on its face: "This Note Is Legal Tender for All Debts, Public and Private." "Tender for all debts," the motto on the American heart: every debt, public or private, forgiven, dismissed, and treated, well, tenderly.

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It ought to work. But, as happened with the New Coke, nobody is buying it. The new twenties, following the fifties and hundreds, have been appearing in cash machines and wallets, and they have got anything but what you would call money notices. Everybody hates them. Edward Rothstein in the *Times* has come out against them, and there's even on-line rebellion against the New Money, including a heated discussion group on A.O.L.

Everybody who sees the New Money says that it doesn't look like money. Everybody says that it looks like coupons, like play money, like funny money, like fake money, or, most often, like "Monopoly money." This is an odd objection, since the New Money doesn't look anything like Monopoly money. "I don't know why they say that, because, if you've ever noticed, Monopoly money is quite small in size, it comes in different colors, and it doesn't feature portraits of famous Americans on the front," a Treasury official has said plaintively, and accurately. So what *do* people mean when they say it?

The trouble started with the whole idea of making the New Money by fiddling around with the Old Money. The New Money, if you haven't seen it yet, keeps the main graphic elements of the Old Money, and wiggles them a little. The medallion around the head of each President who appears on it—the same guy as before—is twice as big, and has become a simple oval; the Presidents' faces are more detailed and three-dimensional; most of the fancy cartouche and tobacco-leaf framing elements are gone, and a brutally simple, Cubist sans-serif number is inserted on the back.

It would be easy to say that the enlarged, oversized Presidents look more like celebrities for a celebrity age. You could do it, but, as a great, undollared President said, it would be wrong. They don't look famous. Old Hickory, who used to just stare out defiantly, below that white shock of hair, on the twenty, looks pensive and worried, while Franklin, on the C note, looks oddly like Hannah Arendt, anxious and modern. They share the quality first discovered in Richard Avedon's portraits of politicians and then passed on to Chuck Close's portraits of artists: anybody just looking straight ahead, if made big enough, looks *guilty*, of something or other. Most troubling of all, there's a lot of blank space on the New Money. The back of the fifty, for instance, is completely borderless, white from the edges in. The old complicated framing devices, all those egg-and-dart patterns, have been sucked right off. The elements are the same, but the whole thing is a lot sparer. The New Money just looks—well, the New Money looks cheaper than the Old Money.

When money changes, it doesn't usually change like this. In France, for instance, the money has just changed, too. But in France the old paladins—Delacroix on the hundred-franc note, Montesquieu on the two-hundred—have been dismissed outright, like gov-

TOP: ROZ CHAST; BOTTOM: JACK ZIEGLER

ernment ministers, and been told to take their style, their pale, imitation-watercolor palette, with them. Even Delacroix's Liberty, who kept him company with her gallant bare nipple, has been retired. The new heroes on French money bring along their own distinct emblems: on the two-hundred, there's Eiffel (with his half-completed tower); on the hundred, there's Cézanne (with his card-players); and on the fifty-franc note—the French ten-dollar bill, the one you really use—there's Saint-Exupéry, with his Little Prince. And not just the Little Prince but also that sheep he wanted the aviator to draw—"If you please, draw me a sheep!"—looking wistful. When you pay a bad-tempered taxi-driver in Paris today, you hand over Cézanne and his anxiety, and the driver hands you back the Prince and the Sheep and their contempt for the grownups' money-obsessed ways. Even the British have changed their money several times recently. The Queen has been aging on it. She has been growing old—slowly, discreetly, but unmistakably. An odd, Dorian Gray-like conception: money with liver spots and lines.

Our money, though, has stayed the same for so much longer than anyone else's that it has become fixed—evergreen. (Not even the Presidents aged, since they were all dead anyway.) It would be nice to say that our money stayed the same for so long because it was so well designed, but really its having stayed the same for so long was just a reproach to the idea that good design matters much in the first place. Like Häagen-Dazs ice cream in its pristine period, when all the flavors came in the same carton, the Old Money showed that people are remarkably insensitive to packaging when they like the product. That our tens and twenties and fifties and hundreds looked, at a glance, just about the same never seemed to bother anybody. The pretense of a mixup—"Hey, wasn't that a twenty I gave you?"—was a con man's line. When it comes to kinds of money and kinds of ice cream, in a country that is made of both, you can always manage to tell the flavors apart.

What the Old Money had wasn't good design but a terrific period feeling. The *Times* calls the look Belle Époque, but it was more American than that. The Old Money looked like the old Gilded Age. Though it got standardized in the nineteen-twenties, its design and its iconography date from the period right after the Civil War: the just finished Capitol, proudly shown off; the tobacco-leaf motif; President Grant as a hero. How beautifully the Old Money managed to evoke the spittoon-and-Sunday-oratory world of the post-Civil War! It was there in the way that the heraldic ribbon above Andrew Jackson put the "The" of "The United States of America" right above his head, like a hinge. It was there in the solid, shadowy lettering of "Twenty Dollars"—the kind you still see inscribed on the forgotten statues of the 1876 centennial exposition in Fairmount Park, in Philadelphia. Even the left-over eighteenth-century Masonic symbols—that pyramid! that eye!—felt reassuring. (You see, we can assimilate *any* cult, it said. Check out our Mormons, well groomed and orderly in Utah.) The Old Money presided over calm avenues, and it was melancholy, too, in the stately way of Gilded Age sadness. Is there a sweeter American image than that single motorcar chuffing along outside the Treasury Building on the back of the old ten? It has stayed there right up through the era of the Santa Monica freeway and drive-by killings, still asking the same forlorn question: *Will the horseless carriage ever catch on*?

The Old Money was the old us. French money says, We have more culture than we know what the hell to do with, we might as well put it here. English money says, We have the Queen and a funny system of change, that's us, take it or leave it. (And the touching, absurd systems of the Mediterranean countries, counted out boastfully in tiny increments—*thousands* of pesetas, *millions* of drachmas, *billions* of lire—say everything you need to know about the insecurity of little states.) Our money said that America was basically a big green country inhabited by politicians and weirdos. The fixed, cigar-store Indian stillness of the American dollar—its essential sobriety—seemed the right counterpoint to our perpetually adolescent free market, with its rush and its frenzies and its absolute lack of memory. Money, after all, is the thing that makes a free market possible, but it is possible only as a product of an unchallenged state that sets rules and tolerates no competition. Money is exactly the kind of government program that lib-

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erals always want to throw money at.

Our money was so stable, so unchanged over such a long time, in fact, that it produced a companion genre—funny money, play money, fictional money, Monopoly money. It doesn't exist in anything like the same abundance in other countries (when you go to buy funny money for a kid in France, you get the American kind), because it depends on there being something so familiar and unchanged that it can be evoked by a few rudimentary tokens: the face in the oval, the black on the front and the green on the back. American money was so familiar that a few coarse indications—even, as in Monopoly, a handful of typographic gestures—were enough to let you know what it was supposed to be.

That is where the problem lies for the New Money. All the clues that the New Money sends out, its little spray of signifiers—the oversized President's head, like but not quite like the familiar smaller one, the Gilded Age complexity indicated but not quite present—announce it as a familiar genre, parody money, one of those inventions that look enough like money to stand for money without actually being money. Had the French done the same thing—kept Delacroix and made Liberty's nipple and breast bigger—the new francs would not have been new money, either; they would have been burlesque money.

The New Money isn't newly minted money. It's metamoney. We are disturbed by the New Money because it uses the traditional satiric devices of exaggeration, displacement, and oversimplification, and therefore seems to be offering some kind of comment on the Old Money. It seems to be getting at us in some obscure way. It does have an "X-Files" side. Wherever the New Money seems perfectly blank, it can be made to reveal a whole microworld of symbolism and eerie stuff, such as watermarks, embedded "security threads," and hidden signs. There is a little line toward the bottom of the portrait of Jackson that says, in microscopically small type, "The United States of America." (Apparently, even the best color Xerox would render it as a broken, wavering line.) Hold the hundred-dollar bill casually up to the light and you see, to your shock, a smaller mimic portrait of Franklin with a significantly different expression; he looks sly and vaguely self-satisfied—Bad, rather than Gentle, Ben—while the smaller "ghost" of Grant on the new fifty looks angry. Presumably, the terrorists in their Bekka Valley lair, who by their counterfeiting skills helped bring on this whole business, are holding the New Money up to the light with tears in their eyes. How do we do *this*, *in the name of Allah?* Faking one President was hard enough, faking him and his evil twin . . . So the money has arrived at a contemporary insight: scrutinize a President long enough, and what you find is not reassuring but weird.

The New Money, created by the forces acting on all of us now—fear of terrorism high among them—is an expression of a New Gilded Age as surely as the Old Money was the expression of the past one. The Old Money had too much going on, right there on the surface. It had more whorls and whirligigs and details and slogans and mottoes and signatures than you knew what to do with. That excess of symbolism was part of a general overspill at the time. Henry James, arriving home almost a hundred years ago, at the climax of the last Gilded Age, was overwhelmed, above all, by the excess of decoration in the hotel lobbies, like that of the old Waldorf-Astoria, on Thirty-fourth Street. The magazine stands with bronze-incised floors! The flower shops spilling over with roses! The marble basins in the barbershops and the hall of mirrors in Peacock Alley! A hundred small details of overcharged luxury. He thought that it was vulgar and overdone, of course, but he saw that at least this deliberate overcharge overflowed—that in America commercial calculation and generosity had, for a moment, become the same thing. Where the Gilded Age was gold, the gold was solid.

The New Money looks like our Gilded Age. In its combination of overkill and emptiness, the New Money evokes the new midtown hotels, with their black-and-white "Deco" marble lobbies, wedged into tiny lots, and then the cold sealed rooms immediately above—the luxury falling off as soon as you've checked in. It calls to mind the new generation of "luxury" multiplex movie theatres, where you're drawn in by a little Egyptian décor and buttered popcorn, and then, ticket bought, find yourself with nothing but a sticky floor and a tiny screen. The comforting come-on

AT THE MUSEUMS

MAD LOVE

Man Ray, the raciest American in Paris between the world wars, had a preternatural feel for zones of artistic invention where avant-gardism jostled fashion—in a pre-Warhol era, hard to imagine now, before the two entities collapsed into each other permanently. As a painter, filmmaker, and creator of droll, sinister *objets*, Man Ray had been a leading Dadaist and became a prized fellow-traveller of the Surrealists. His day job was portrait and magazine photography. He performed suave, acrid, always startlingly novel magic at the crossroads of art and commerce.

In the darkening Europe of 1929, the year of "Blanc et Noir" (at the right), aesthetic appetites in Paris ran to ever stronger stuff. Earlier stages of Surrealism began to give way to such deliriously lived philosophies as the cultivation of audacious erotic behavior that was dubbed *amour fou*. The development was right up Man Ray's alley. He had been a sexual quester since his still unreconstructed youth as Emmanuel Radnitzky in Brooklyn.

Why isn't this strenuously kinky photograph essentially pornographic? Because pornography is drearily serious-minded, and the image, as always with Man Ray, sets in motion a spiral of dark hilarity. It is about the objectification of women—or Woman—raised to a pitch of clamorous self-parody. It is a mocking mirror of panting desire. The model's icy mien renders her seeming availability edgily, rather discouragingly self-conscious.

What to make of the chameleon Man Ray is a lingering problem for the art culture at the end of the century, and the late appearance of little-known works like this one—from a series in which the model vogues numerous attitudes, blasphemously including one of crucifixion—doesn't make it any easier. "Blanc et Noir" joins other rankling revelations in "Man Ray: Photography and Its Double," an exhibition drawn from the artist's personal archive, which will be at the International Center of Photography until January 24th. —Peter Schjeldahl

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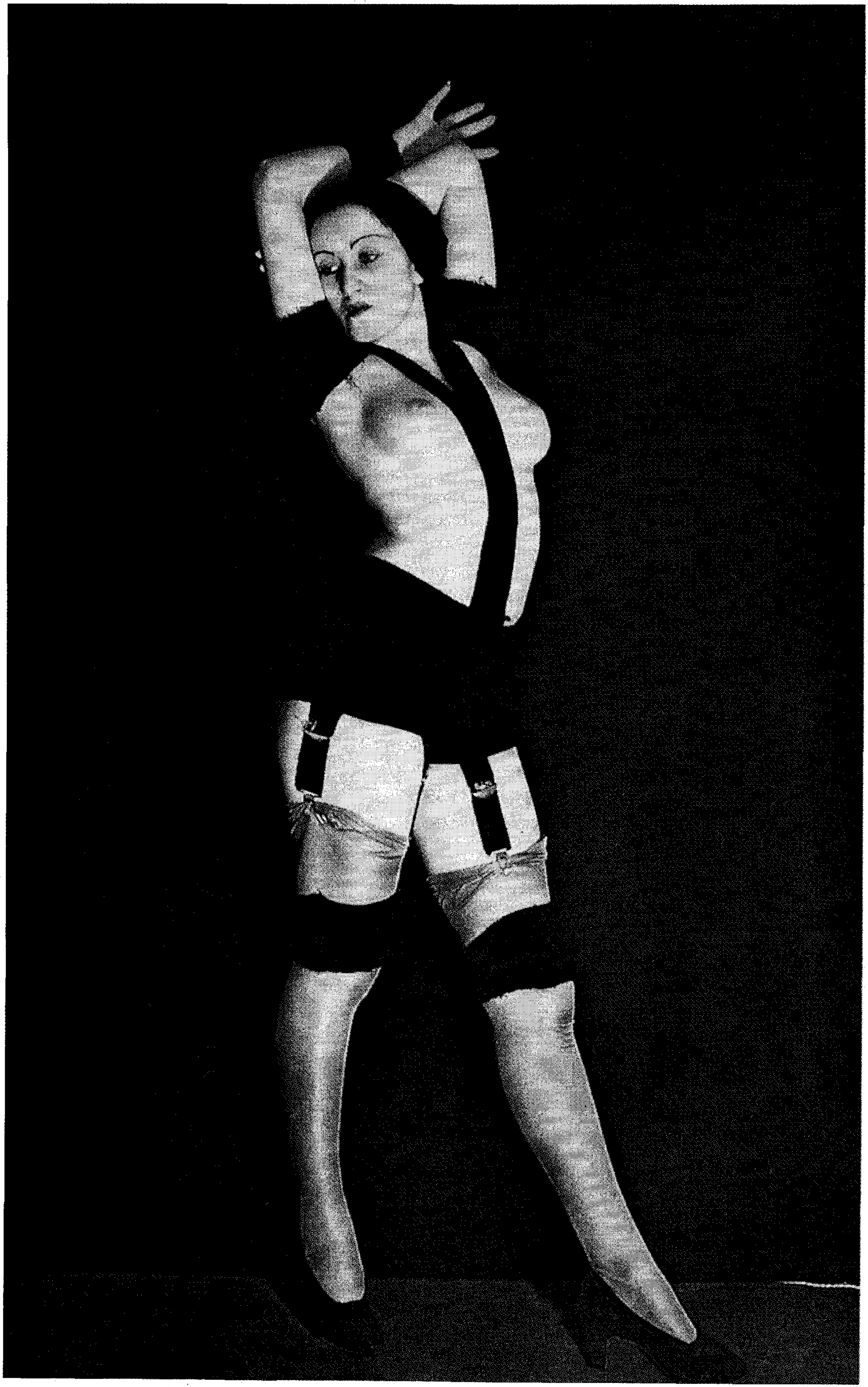

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and then the sudden abrupt blankness—*that's* the look of the New Gilded Age, and the New Money has it. The New Money cuts off the flow of meaning as soon as you've, so to speak, "bought it." It's Camden Yards money—see, just as good as the old place, sonny, with all the old-fashioned charm you're used to. Have another hot dog. And underneath—the part of the stadium shown only to Rupert Murdoch—in the security control center, the cables run out to the surveillance cameras that keep a secret eye on the crowd, just as the electronic doodads in the money that let you get in wink at you beneath their reassuring nineteenth-century façade. Faux-retro reassurance and security-strip paranoia now share the same bedroom, or dollar bill.

The New Money comes to us at a time when money, the kind you put in your pocket, no longer makes the world go round. Cash is now the closest thing we have to contraband. When you see a lot of it in a movie, you know that something crooked is up. Rich men now have neither moneybags with dollar signs on them nor bulging wallets but discreet, thin credit cards and a blinking line of electronic numbers. Only those among us who are still deceived go to the cash machines, thinking, Hey, we're in the money! The government is even minting pennies at a several-million-dollar loss—losing money by making it. So the New Money may not be funny money, but it isn't filthy lucre, either. It's just an honest greenback, doing the day's little jobs—like placating a maître d' or paying a babysitter—that no one else wants to do. No wonder the Presidents look tight-lipped. They've been demoted, and they know it. The real economy winks and blinks electronically, secretly, all night long, from Shanghai to Seattle: encoded secure site whispering to encoded secure site. Ben and Abe and Andy must realize this. It's why they now look so anxious. They're working for tips, just like the rest of us. ♦

CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Huntington* (*W. Va.*) *Herald-Dispatch*]

HUNTINGTON—Witnesses said an elderly woman found dead in her West Huntington mobile home Sunday was apparently discovered bound and gagged lying on the floor in a knocked-over chair.

Police have declined to comment on whether the death is suspicious.

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BOOKS

AWRIIIIIGHHHHHHHHHT!

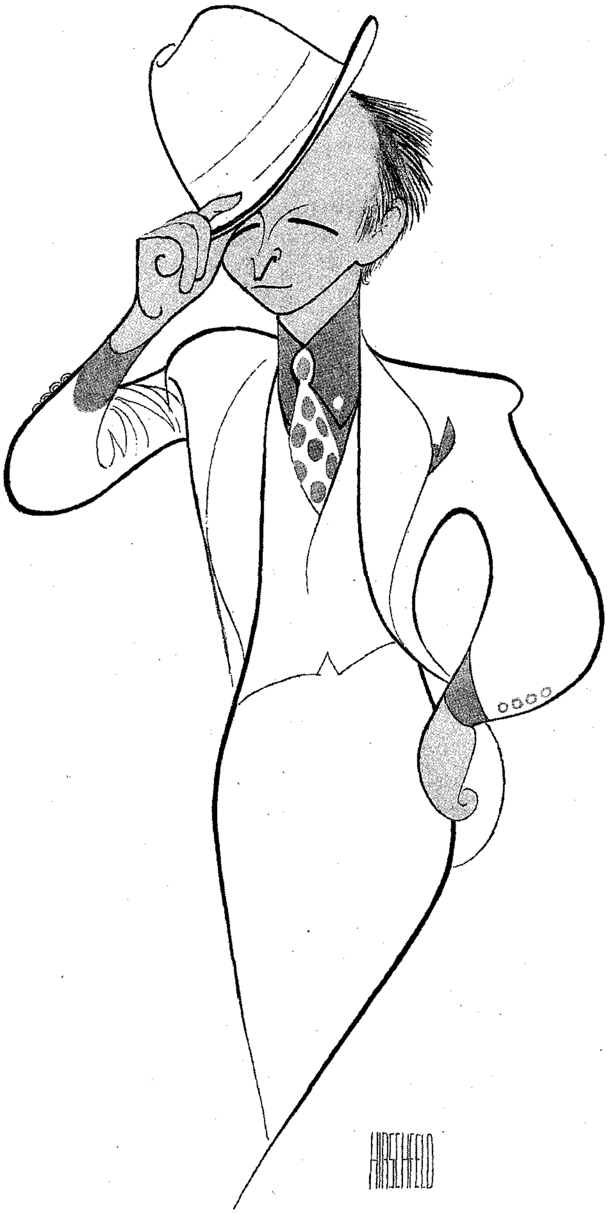
Tom Wolfe looks hard at America.

BY JOHN UPDIKE

Tom Wolfe's novel "A Man in Full" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $28.95) is, like its hero, Charlie Croker, burly. The book weighs in as a seven-hundred-and-forty-two-page bruiser, whose jacket vaunts the author's name in letters so big that the "o" in "Tom" is cut out and the eye of the semi-glossy portrait of Croker on the cover stares through. A book to muscle aside all the others on the New Releases table. A book that defies you not to buy it. Croker, a sixty-year-old former Georgia Tech football star who has become a millionaire Atlanta real-estate developer and the owner of a twenty-nine-thousand-acre plantation maintained for shooting quail in, excites Wolfe's excitable prose to raptures of anatomical specification: "He flexed and fanned out the biggest muscles of his back, the latissimi dorsi, in a Charlie Croker version of a peacock or a turkey preening . . . his massive neck, his broad shoulders, his prodigious forearms; but above all he was proud of his back. . . . 'I got a back like a Jersey bull!' "

This is a muscular opus. A present-day Georgia Tech football star, Fareek (the Cannon) Fanon, "wore a black polo shirt . . . wide open at the throat, revealing the long, thick pair of muscles that came down the sides of his neck and inserted at the clavicle." Fanon's coach, Buck McNutter, is no beanpole: "His neck, which seemed a foot wide, rose up out of a yellow polo shirt and a blue blazer as if it were unit-welded to his trapezius muscles and his shoulders." And, on the other side of the continent, in the working-class California town of Pittsburg, thirty miles east of Oakland, an idealistic but ill-starred young man named Conrad Hensley has developed a formidable upper body from toting eighty-pound blocks of frozen food in a Croker Global Foods warehouse:

> He liked the way the T-shirt stretched across his chest and his shoulders, which were highly defined. . . . He pulled the T-shirt out of his pants and slid it up over his ribs so as to bare his midsection, and he tensed his abdominal muscles until they popped out like a six-pack. He was . . . *cut, ripped*, as the bodybuilders liked to put it, from wrestling with all those tons of frozen product at Croker Global. . . . Then he lifted his forearms and hands and made two fists. . . . His forearms were positively gorged with muscle. [Ellipses not mine.]



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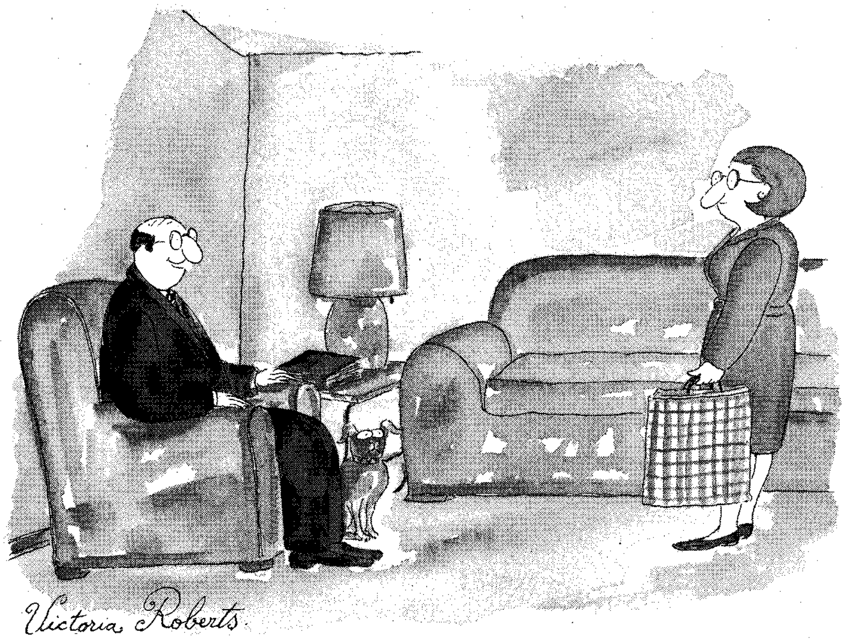
All these bodies—not to mention those of the young women, "perfect boys with breasts," with their "loamy loins" and "cloven hindquarters" and thighs that "tapered down to where they inserted into the knees"—illustrate the sociological fact that America in the nineteen-nineties is mad about conditioning, and give a certain pumped-up sheen to the teeming cast of characters. Another fin-de-siècle fact seems to be the persistence of rap music, and Wolfe, never a quiet writer, gets more poetry and thematic harmony out of flat, hostile, usually obscene rap lyrics than I would have thought possible. The book contains a vision of hell, which is the Santa Rita Rehabilitation Center, a converted array of old Army barracks outside Oakland; each night after lights are out, the jail's rapmaster launches verses into the air, which stinks of caged and sleepless men. A relatively tame sample is:

> Yo, sugar!—think 'at's a ruby
> You got stuck inside yo' crack?
> The fuck, yo' booty turned to gold
> While you was lyin' on your back?

More than twenty-five years ago, Wolfe chastised his writing contemporaries with ignoring most of the American reality, the brawling socioeconomic and power-crazed vastness of it, concerning themselves instead with trivial introspective exercises. "A Man in Full" is a brave, flamboyant effort to practice what he preached. He gives us Atlanta as an image of a mixed-blood nation, where black and white and Asian uneasily, busily coexist. His portraits of Ameri-



"You don't look as if you voted."

• •

cans with African ancestry range from the dapper, pale-brown, Stravinsky-loving lawyer Roger White II, called since college Roger Too White, to the brutal, almost unintelligible black inmates of the Santa Rita jail. Wolfe's renditions of black talk encompass the confident rhythms of a slick clergyman, the irony-layered banter of two ambitious college-educated "brothers," the self-protective deference of an anachronistic Uncle Tom, the sullen non-compliance of a ghetto-bred "homey," and teasing talk among young women ("It's know-it time, girlfriend"). Anthologies of African-American literature are not apt to enshrine passages from this jumpy comedy by a white native of Richmond who wears a white planter's suit; nevertheless, in a strange but honorable way, Wolfe has attempted a Great Black Novel. Knowing, of course, his own temerity, he has worked hard on the novel's black sections, making them morally elaborate as well as intensely observant. There is no mooning about slavery or jazz; instead, a crisply animated survey of the current situation takes in a big-city mayor's office, a crack house, a black athlete's truculent triumph, and an inferno of incarcerated young black men. The most sympathetic and nervously responsive character in the book is Roger Too White, who manages in the end to unbutton his prim shell and reclaim solidarity with his people. A sentimental pilgrimage, some might say, that comes around to white America's favorite Negro, Booker T. Washington: "'I see that Booker T. was right all along,' said Roger." But the book cannot be denied its admirable determination to view, with however blue an eye, the United States whole, as a nation whose black thirteen per cent interacts with the rest, economically, culturally, and personally.

Plot. There is a great deal of it, spreading like kudzu, sending eager tendrils everywhere. Charlie Croker, that Georgia cracker turned plutocrat, has overreached, building a forty-story skyscraper named after himself outside Atlanta, and is badly bankrupt, while maintaining his baronial life style in the face of ever fiercer attempts on the part of PlannersBanc, his main creditor, to reclaim its squandered hundreds of millions. Fareek Fanon, the new, African-American installment of football muscle, is alleged to have raped the eighteen-year-old daughter of another Atlanta baron, Inman Armholster. Coach Buck McNutter wants Fareek on his team, and Wesley Dobbs Jordan, Atlanta's black mayor, doesn't want race riots, nor does the white

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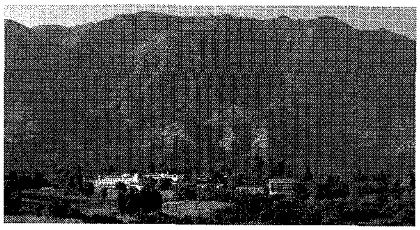

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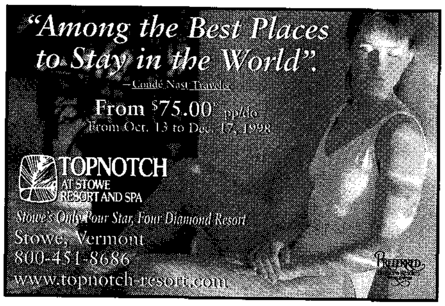

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business establishment. Meanwhile, for reasons that take five hundred pages to dawn, we are made privy to the drab life of Conrad Hensley, who after being laid off by Croker Global Foods winds up in jail, where his only comfort is a volume of Epictetus and other Stoics. He becomes a devotee of Zeus, and, sure enough, Zeus one critical night ordains an earthquake that... but leave Wolfe's tale its baroque secrets. He concocts a good, if sometimes laborious, read, which becomes perfunctory and implausible only toward the end. The laboriousness derives, in part, from the worked-up quality of many scenes, masterpieces of creative journalism but a little thick for floating suspense and characters with free will. The preeningly expert architectural details, the avid sartorial specifics, the infallibly lively décors in all their dubious taste, the price tag attached to everything worn or inhabited, the painstakingly spelled-out accents, the explosive onomatopoetics—"Brannnnng! Brannnnng! Brannnnng!" "Woooo-eeeeee! Hegh-heggghhhhhh," "Ahhhhhhhhhhh ahhhhhhhhhhh ahhhhhhhhhhh," "Superflyyyyyyyyyyyyyy!," "eye eye eye eye eye eye eye eye," "Scrack scrack scrack scraaaccck," "glug glug glug glugluglug," "Awriiiighhhhhhhht!"—all remind the reader of the vigilant, mischievous, but rather disapproving presence of the writer, for whom America comes down to noise, trash, and vanity.

Relatively little of Wolfe's celebrated Toryism shows, though he does put in the mouth of a fictional (I assume) director of Atlanta's High Museum a hilarious stretch of Foucault-speak, and he does suggest that hippies make poor parents. The novel, which is prefaced by two pages of breathless thanks to all those who guided and supported the author through his perilous tour of "the telling details of contemporary American life," proceeds by set pieces: a plantation quail hunt, the majestic and indecent maneuver of bringing a stud stallion into contact with a mare in the plantation's brick breeding barn, the gabbly social ritual of a museum benefit, the grisly workout of a "shithead" (a loan defaulter) in a bank's conference room, an exercise class as painfully experienced by a fifty-three-year-old cast-off wife, a fashionable restaurant, a

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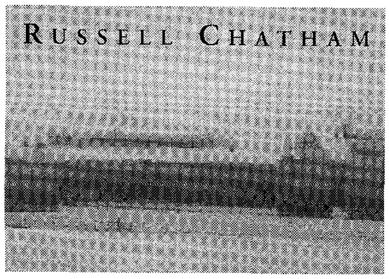

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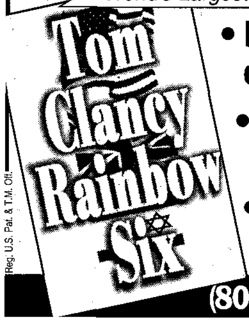

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rattlesnake capture—we are surrounded by a modern equivalent of the Cyclorama, "an immense circular mural, a full 360 degrees, illustrating the Battle of Atlanta during the Civil War." For good measure, Wolfe "does" greater Oakland to a T, and, when the hero of a subplot, the scheming loan officer Raymond Peepgass, briefly travels to the Bahamas, Wolfe does Nassau. So much local information, so many well-lighted settings, so much *news* do not quite knit into a novel powered by the human spirit as it gropes and struggles for focus. Wolfe has perhaps too many opinions for a novelist: his characters have a hard time breaking out of the illustrative mold in which they are cast. For instance, the physically perfect, periwinkle-eyed Serena Croker, our hero's twenty-eight-year-old second wife, hovers at his side so blankly that one expects from her at last some revelatory motion, of betrayal or rescue; but she turns out to be a mere gold-digger, as labelled, who disappears when the gold does.

Wolfe loves, or wants to love, Charlie Croker. I must confess that every time I have tried to read "Bonfire of the Vanities" the blatancy of its icy-hearted satire repelled me. "A Man in Full" is warmed by the Southern setting. Wolfe remains Southerner enough to respect the old macho notion of Southern manhood—narrow, maybe, and bigoted, but also gallant and life-loving—and traces its collapse with a certain regret, even as he piles tribulations upon Charlie Croker's balding, bull-necked head. Yet Wolfe has become Northerner enough to make us feel that Charlie is a specimen under glass; his non-U pronunciations are steadfastly spelled out—"sump'm" for "something," "far fat" for "fire fight"—in a way that a Faulkner character would be spared. For Faulkner, Southern life was life; for Wolfe, it is a provincial curiosity, though one he cherishes. The lush landscape moves him to nature lyricism; the suburban luxury of Atlanta's Buckhead neighborhood sets off idyllic catalogues of sun-splashed antiques and shrubs. He is, disarmingly, dazzled, and something of this dazzlement rubs off. Eleven years in the making, and encumbered with perhaps too many separate inspirations, "A Man in Full" touches us with its grand ambition: a talented, inventive, philosophical-minded journalist, coming into old age, has gone for broke in this populous cyclorama of an Atlanta still at war. For a time, I wondered why, doing so much justice to sex ("God's cosmic joke") and greed, Wolfe had left religion out of the human equation. But the novel turns out to be all about religion, culminating in renunciation and non-attachment; the world with its baubles has been conjured up only to be dismissed with a wave of a dandy's hand. In a post-Christian world, Wolfe offers us, at considerable explanatory length, the nobility of Stoicism.

This is high-minded, but "A Man in Full" still amounts to entertainment, not literature, even literature in a modest aspirant form. Like a movie desperate to recoup its bankers' investment, the novel tries too hard to please us. Wolfe's exclamatory interjections ("Packs! Dens! Utterly primitive animal turfs!" "Brute sexual energy! A herd of young male animals!" "More thrashing! Looser teeth! Blood! Bone fragments!") are like surges of background music, telling us what to feel, not trusting us to react without supervision. "Literature's a sort of dessert," a minor character, an old professor, tells the pilgrim Conrad. We want dessert to be choice. Wolfe shares a name with another profuse, inclusive Southern writer who failed to be exquisite. Such failure might not seem to be major, but in the long run it is. Henry James, composing, in 1900, a preface for his youthful novel "Roderick Hudson" a quarter century after he wrote it, recalled intricate difficulties and spelled out modernism's demanding criterion for the new century:

> The greater complexity, the superior truth, was all more or less present to me; only the question was, too dreadfully, how make it present to the reader? How boil down so many facts in the alembic, so that the distilled result, the produced appearance, should have intensity, lucidity, brevity, beauty, all the merits required for my effect? . . . It is only by doing such things that art becomes exquisite, and it is only by positively becoming exquisite that it keeps clear of becoming vulgar, repudiates the coarse industries that masquerade in its name. ◆

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BRIEFLY NOTED

THE EVOLUTION OF JANE, by Cathleen Schine (Houghton Mifflin; $24). "First Martha and I were one, now we were two," Jane Barlow Schwartz, Schine's wry narrator, woefully tells us. For Jane, the loss of her cousin and childhood best friend was far more troubling than her later divorce from a badly chosen husband. When she and Martha are unexpectedly reunited on a cruise around the Galápagos Islands, Jane struggles to identify the "splitting event" that drove them apart, and in the process she uncovers a welter of family secrets and on-board antics. The intricacies of Darwinian evolution and natural history provide excellent fodder for Schine's comic sensibility, but her inquiry into girlhood friendship never quite attains the introspective power afforded by its premise.

THE WHEREABOUTS OF ENEAS MCNULTY, by Sebastian Barry (Viking; $23.95). The eponymous hero of this novel is an Irish odd man out. Born into pinched, eccentric circumstances in Sligo, at the turn of the century, Eneas innocently enlists in the Royal Irish Constabulary during the Troubles and becomes a marked man for life. Pursued by his best friend turned I.R.A. enforcer, he finds nomadic work as a herring fisherman in Scotland, a volunteer soldier at the retreat through Dunkirk, a canal digger in postcolonial Nigeria, and, finally, as the proprietor of a doss-house for homeless men on the Isle of Dogs. Although Eneas will leave no trace on the record of the century, he grows into an unforgettable Everyman, thanks to Barry's fine bardic voice, which is tinctured with humor and compassion.

DAWN POWELL, by Tim Page (Holt; $30). This biography, written by the chief music critic for the Washington *Post*, is a powerful book, partly because of its author's skill and partly because Powell herself was indomitable and undeviating. At the age of ten, she decided to become a writer, and she did. She survived such hazards as a sadistic stepmother, an ambivalent marriage, a disturbed son, extreme poverty, and the alcoholic social life of New York's literati. Her originality was recognized but misunderstood, and her books sold poorly, yet nothing and no one persuaded her to stop writing. Her reward? When she died, in 1965, she was buried in New York's potter's field, but eleven of her fifteen novels are now in print.

THIEVES OF PARADISE, by Yusef Komunyakaa (Wesleyan; $19.95). The central subjects of Komunyakaa's poetry—his experiences in the Vietnam War and as an African-American male—have always been made compelling in his hands, and equally compelling has been the moodily energetic, jazz-inspired improvisatory technique that he employs with increasing mastery. But what is most gratifying about Komunyakaa's surrealist riffs, with their almost hallucinatory lushness, is their power to convince us that the individual imagination is more than equal to the most excruciating historical burden.

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THAT CENTURY, YET AGAIN

But this time a cliché begets great history.

BY SEAN WILENTZ

When Henry Luce coined the phrase "the American Century," in 1941, he was not congratulating his countrymen, he was scolding them. "We Americans are unhappy," he wrote in *Time*, describing the prevailing sour isolationist mood. "We are not happy about ourselves in relation to America." Luce wanted to inspire his readers—to get them to accept their nation's manifest historical mission and to "do their mysterious work of lifting the life of mankind." The twentieth century ought to be America's, he believed, but, with the century two-fifths over, he doubted whether this would come to pass.

Luce's fears have, for better and for worse, proved groundless. Yet his phrase has lived on, not as an admonition but as a slogan to connote America's emergence as the preëminent world power. Over the years, no fewer than half a dozen books have appeared containing "American Century" in their title, most prominently Ronald Steel's National Book Award-winning biography, "Walter Lippmann and the American Century." And now, with fin-de-siècle fever gripping the media, the slogan is about to be recycled as never before, on television specials, in books and periodicals, and (just wait) countless editorial columns and op-ed articles in search of an organizing theme.

Harold Evans's "The American Century" (Knopf; $50) may well be the only one of these recyclings that will endure. And for readers like me, who have encountered the English-born Mr. Evans chiefly in the business sections and on the society pages of the metropolitan press, this will confute expectations. Great Britain has, to be sure, produced numerous able observers and chroniclers of the American scene, descending in brilliance from the nineteenth-century political writer Lord James Bryce to, in our own time, the newspaperman and television personality Alistair Cooke. Yet "The American Century" has the squat shape and silvery dust jacket of a Christmas-season coffee-table picture book. And there is little in Mr. Evans's earlier career—as a Fleet Street journalist, as an American publisher, and as an author (his previous titles include "Newspaper Design," which is charming and idiosyncratic, and "Suffer the Children: The Story of Thalidomide," which is neither)—that prepares us for this expertly argued and splendidly illustrated work of American history. Books often surprise, but rarely this happily.

Harold Evans lavishes attention on the underside of American history.

BROWN BROTHERS

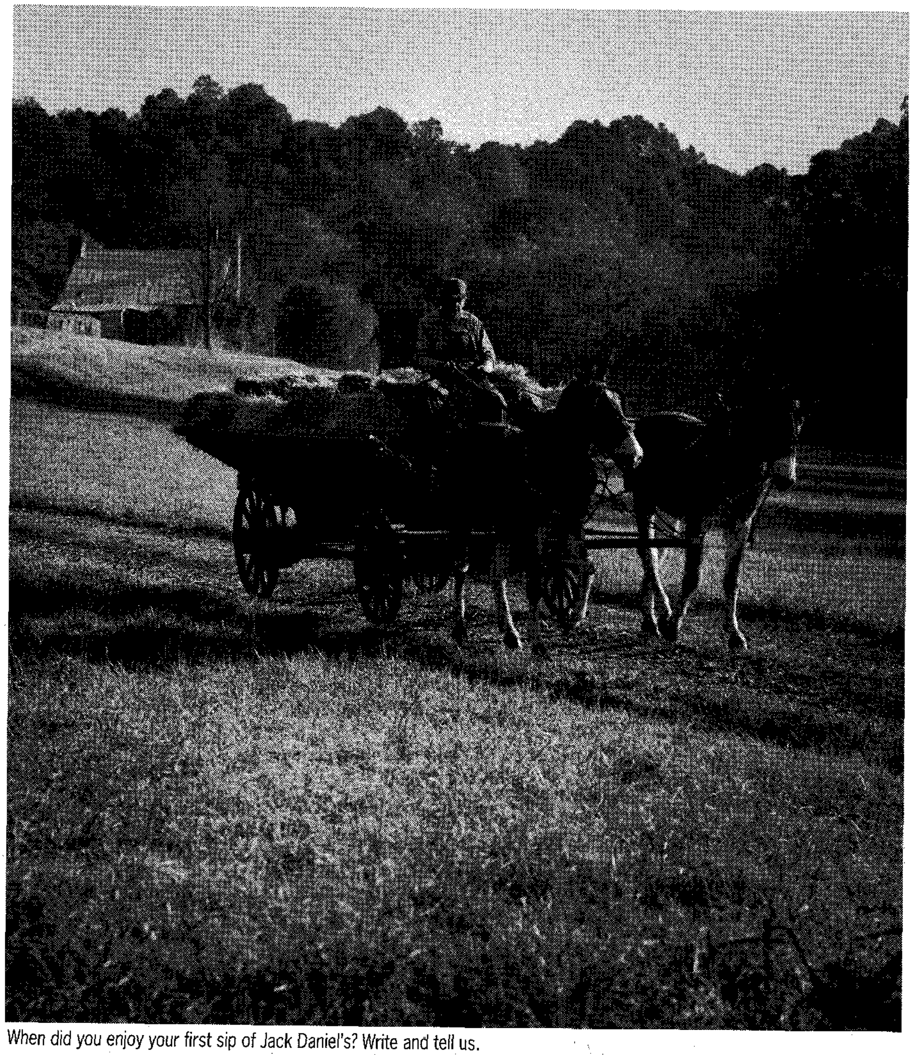
Evans opens not in 1900 (which, apart from a devastating hurricane that flattened Galveston, Texas, was a year of little importance) but in 1889, the hundredth anniversary of George Washington's Inauguration. America's second century, and not the twentieth century, is what bounds Evans's story, and that makes a great deal of historical sense. It was, after all, in 1890 that the American frontier was formally "closed," thereby marking a symbolic break between the nation's agrarian past and its industrial future. It was the Homestead steel strike, in 1892, and the Pullman railway strike, two years later, that ushered in the massive labor unrest that would culminate in the nineteen-thirties. It was the ferocious Presidential election of 1896, in which the gold-bug Republican William McKinley thrashed the Populist-backed Democrat William Jennings Bryan, that spelled the doom of a rural, yeoman ideal that dated back to Thomas Jefferson. And, looking at the other end of Evans's century, 1989, the beginning of the end of the Cold War seems far more likely to appear to later generations as a turning point in American history than anything that is on the horizon for 2000.

Evans explores his century with energy and wit. The standard themes of the period—the Progressive era, the Great Depression, the Second World War, the civil-rights movement—get abundant treatment in the form of telling vignettes. (Evans describes Franklin Delano Roosevelt being wheeled into his White House office for his first day of work, "helplessly alone at a bare desk bereft of pen or paper," sitting "in blank-minded fear, as paralyzed in mind as in body," until, not knowing what else to do, he started yelling orders to his secretaries, trying to do something, anything—a parable of how he would conduct the New Deal.) But Evans's greater contribution is to lavish almost as much attention on the underside of American history: the foiled socialists and labor organizers of Eugene V. Debs's Socialist Party and of the Industrial Workers of the World; the riches-to-rags businessmen who in each generation watched prosperity curdle; the tragic political leaders, among them the greatly talented Herbert Hoover, whose "most sustained self-delusion was that he was winning."

THE most startling moments in the book, however, are not literary but photographic. Evans, with the help of his picture editor, Gail Buckland, has carefully interspersed familiar images with images that have rarely, if ever, been seen in print. There is a slightly smudged shot of Allied officers attending the signing of the peace treaty at Versailles on June 28, 1919, some listlessly seated in stuffed chairs, others standing on chairs and tables to witness what they expected would be Germany's eternal submission. There is a 1974 picture of former Attorney General John Mitchell and three lawyers splayed out on a hotel-room couch, highballs in hand, embracing sloppily and celebrating a temporary legal reprieve, just three months before Richard Nixon resigned and less than a year before Mitchell was sentenced to prison.

And then there is a picture of Dean Acheson, President Truman's patrician Secretary of State, standing in a Senate-office-building elevator at the height of the fifties Red scare, when congressional roughnecks were impugning his patriotism and screaming for his head. Acheson's mustache bristles and his eyes pop with incredulity as a man to his right cheerily greets him: it is Joe McCarthy, wearing a clenched, bemused smile. McCarthy was "numb to the outrage he produced in others," Evans writes in the picture caption, "a pathology that led to his downfall." In a flash, we see the past more clearly than before.

History as lived experience almost never conforms to the neat chronologies later imposed by historians. So it has been for the so-called American Century—a loose and baggy conceit dreamed up by a journalist. Now Harold Evans, himself a journalist, has given substance to the cliché, by writing a work of history which lives and breathes and wonderfully instructs. ◆



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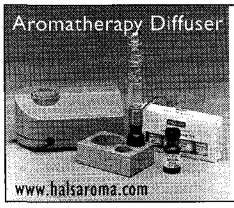

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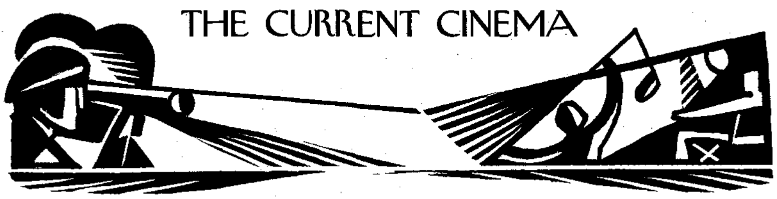


THE CURRENT CINEMA

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

Monsters and rock stars brought back to life.

BY ANTHONY LANE

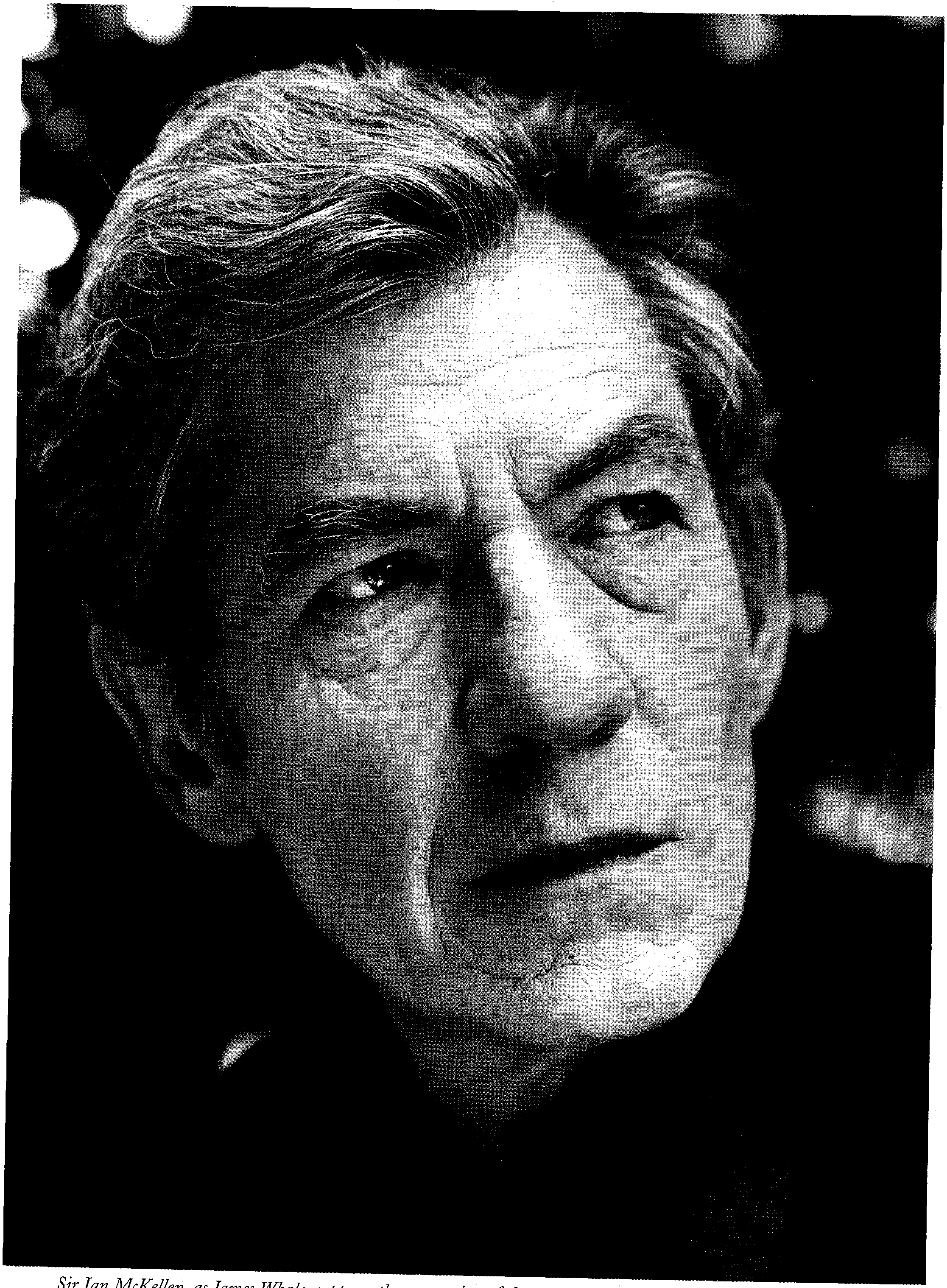
Most of "Gods and Monsters" takes place at an unnamed time and location, but if I had to hazard a guess I would say we were looking at 788 South Amalfi Drive, Pacific Palisades, in the late spring of 1957. It was in that impeccable climate that James Whale, the director of "Frankenstein," lived out his last days; and it was against the concrete bottom of the pool at 788 that he appears, quite purposefully, to have dashed his noble brow. He certainly drowned there on the morning of May 29th; it is the events leading up to that morning which interest Bill Condon, the writer and director of the movie. Condon plainly believes that Whale should be ranked, with the William Holden character in "Sunset Boulevard," as one of the most illustrious floating corpses in California.

"Gods and Monsters" is based on "Father of Frankenstein," the 1995 novel by Christopher Bram, though it depends, too, on the strenuous biographical endeavors of James Curtis, whose updated study of Whale was published earlier this year. Above all, what lowers over the movie—what drapes it like a twitching shroud, despite the glittering sunlight of its setting—is the shadowed, angular landscape of Whale's own work. Whether he liked it or not, his fame rested on only a handful of his twenty full-length features; moviegoers tend to forget that he was responsible for "Showboat," but the name of James Whale clings like a cobweb to "Frankenstein," "Bride of Frankenstein," and "The Invisible Man." It is one of the satisfying ironies of Hollywood that to a surprising degree horror has been the preserve of gentlemen. The two Frankenstein movies are at their best when they are punctuated by monosyllabic grunts, but they were devised by a man whose idea of a relaxing day was to put on a three-piece suit, pour himself a cup of tea, and copy a Rembrandt.

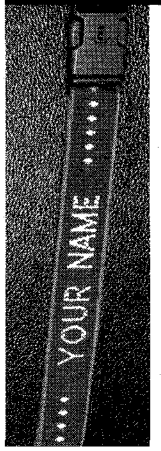
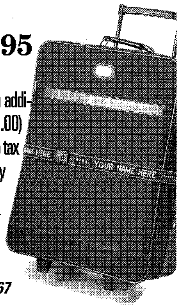
Whale is a peach of a part for Ian McKellen; it isn't every day that you get a chance to deliver the line "My pajamas are all tailored." He directs us to the enervation of the perplexed dandy: the man who is primed to improve the world—the look of it, at least, rather than its sclerotic morals—but in whom the world is no longer interested. ("Showboat" was released in 1936, and in his final decade Whale found only fitful employment.) When McKellen lingers for a fraction of a second on his consonants—"*Wh*ale," "*p*ills"—you catch not just the intonations of the snob but also the mournfulness of someone with time hanging heavy on his hands. The blue eyes gaze around for anything that might serve as a cure for boredom, and, passing over his purse-lipped housekeeper (a very funny Lynn Redgrave), they alight on his new yard man, a drifter named Clayton Boone (Brendan Fraser) with a Marine tattoo on his arm.

The bulk of the film—most of which, like Boone himself, is fictitious—tells of the two men becoming friends, and of the incredible fact that friendship is as far as it goes. Whale sucks a hulking cigar in the direction of the younger man, but Boone is unfazed by this presidential overture. "You're a homosexual," he says to Whale over lunch, as if he had just identified an impossibly rare species: you're a narwhal; you're a quagga. Boone is straight and uncomplicated, although it is Whale's climactic achievement to twist and enrich him into something more disturbed. You wonder whether all movie directors treat their fellow-men like this—as scripts in need of development.

What guarantees the shrewd, precise grandeur of "Gods and Monsters" is the shape of Brendan Fraser's skull. The movie doesn't belabor the resemblance, but you know that Whale has finally



Sir Ian McKellen, as James Whale, captures the enervation of the perplexed dandy. Photograph by Max Vadukul.

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VILLE ET VILLAGE

found someone as level-headed as the creature whom he electrified into existence in 1931. At one point, the ailing director has a Frankenstein dream, but it reverses the roles: it is the white-coated Boone who leans over the recumbent Whale and removes his brain. Who, we are meant to ask, is the monster now? There are a number of these fantastical episodes littering the film: not just clips from "Bride of Frankenstein" but a splendid sequence in which Whale's errant memory returns to the set of that picture—to his younger incarnation, complete with cigarette holder, and to Rosalind Ayres as a hair-raising double for Elsa Lanchester. Then there is Condon's cruel visual pun, in which the iron skies and blasted trees of "Frankenstein" merge into the unfaked Gothic of the trenches where Whale fought (and, according to the movie, fell in love) during the First World War. What matters, however, is not who he once was—a working-class English child—but what he chose to become. Like any good immigrant, he viewed America as a second chance—as a vast and radiant laboratory where he could play doctor to his own dead self and revivify it as an exquisite beast.

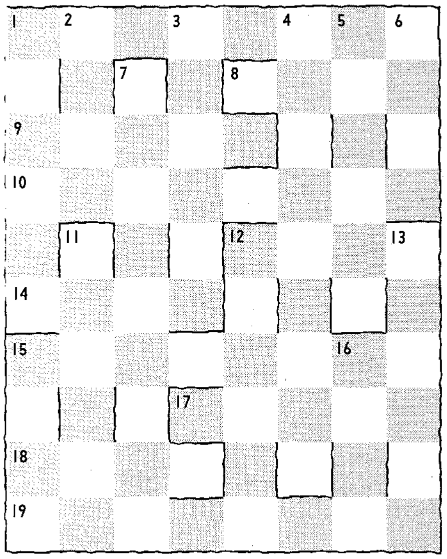
The movie's most radical suggestion is that Whale's own status as outcast—as a gay expatriate in need of love—somehow filtered through to the glazed loneliness in Boris Karloff's eyes. The problem is that, as his biographer makes clear, Whale was notably candid and content with his lecheries; "Frankenstein" was long gone before he started to feel the kick of frustration and the displeasure of Hollywood puritans. As often happens when a public figure is retrieved from oblivion and gilded as a sexual icon, "Gods and Monsters" overplays its hand: the campiness wafts outward from Whale into minor characters such as an obsequious young student (Jack Plotnick) who comes to interview him. Much better is the royal garden party at the home of George Cukor, where Whale bumps into some famous names: we see, in ascending order of horror, Elsa Lanchester, the elderly Boris Karloff, and Princess Margaret. You don't have to be a film buff to relish this portrait of Hollywood—to laugh at a world where the monsters, after a couple of Martinis, are indistinguishable from the gods. Whale scoffed at the nonsense of the movies, yet he knew that they can strike our minds like lightning, and he adored his time as the creator who threw the switch. This picture does him proud, and its closing shot—one of the loveliest I have ever seen—shows Boone stalking through a rainstorm with stiffened legs and outstretched arms, in casual homage to the old British guy with the pool. It's alive!

WRITTEN and directed by Todd Haynes, "Velvet Goldmine" is set in the London of the nineteen-seventies, a period during which grown men modelled their appearance on roosters. At the core of the explosion is Brian Slade (Jonathan Rhys Meyers), a lad with a light voice and a sharp set of cheekbones; he has an oafish manager (Eddie Izzard), a dumbstruck admirer (Christian Bale), a comrade in arms named Curt Wild (Ewan McGregor), and, most surprising of all, a wife (Toni Collette). The movie pays limp respect to the need for a plot, preferring to survey the ins and outs of this mumbling throng—literally so, as they collapse into an orgy. These grim saturnalias were news to me; I have friends with fond memories of that epoch, but, by and large, their boldest contribution to glam rock was to stick a Marc Bolan poster on their bedroom wall, only to have it taken down by their mothers.

The Slade character is obviously a David Bowie rip-off, and the Curt Wild a delicate nod to Iggy Pop; unfortunately, Haynes was not permitted to use Bowie's work, so what we get is a pastiche. Even with Michael Stipe, of R.E.M., as an executive producer, pastiche is a perilously thin art, and it cracks the already fragile surface of the picture. Haynes is right to revere the seventies as a switchback exercise in style; whether he was right to treat it with more of the same is a moot point. As he nips from concert footage and home-movie shots to—wait for it—a reënactment with plastic dolls, you pray for the action to cluster and cohere. This never happens, although I suspect that Haynes wants the shards of "Velvet Goldmine" to come together as an elegy for lost bliss; I would be more convinced by this effort if we had real Bowie to get nostalgic about, and if Haynes didn't keep sprinkling every other scene with feathers, stars, and glitter—pathos in a can. "The secret to becoming a star is knowing how to behave like one," Slade's manager says. True, but it helps if you can sing. ♦

8×10 CRYPTIC

NO. 65 BY DAVID ELLIS DICKERSON



ACROSS

1 Eats birds (8)
8 Take a picture—camera sweeps from right to left (4)
9 Reportedly plotted political corruption (5)
10 Never do a jumping attempt (8)
12 Penny drove to my hearing (4)
14 Touches labels in a store (4)
15 Smith or Jones going around one foreign country (8)
17 Got started, for example, in the middle of Prohibition (5)
18 Cheers for Lech Walesa and others, after introduction (4)
19 Study record of teeth (8)

DOWN

1 Most Solomonic messages teach, in part (6)
2 Counsel North after battle (4)
3 Certain convicts shot rifles (6)
4 Circle part of church with anger, normally (2,7)
5 Vehicles from Washington go north and south (6)
6 Don't close extra box (4)
7 Color level in time for the new year (4,5)
11 In a manner of speaking, mishandle trinket (6)
12 Film is anemic, poorly produced (6)
13 Small high-schoolers club (6)
15 Wearing foot protection, put front end of hoe into dirt (4)
16 Massachusetts-to-Illinois delivery (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 64 appears on page 92. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. For an electronic version, send an E-mail to puzzleguide@newyorker.com.

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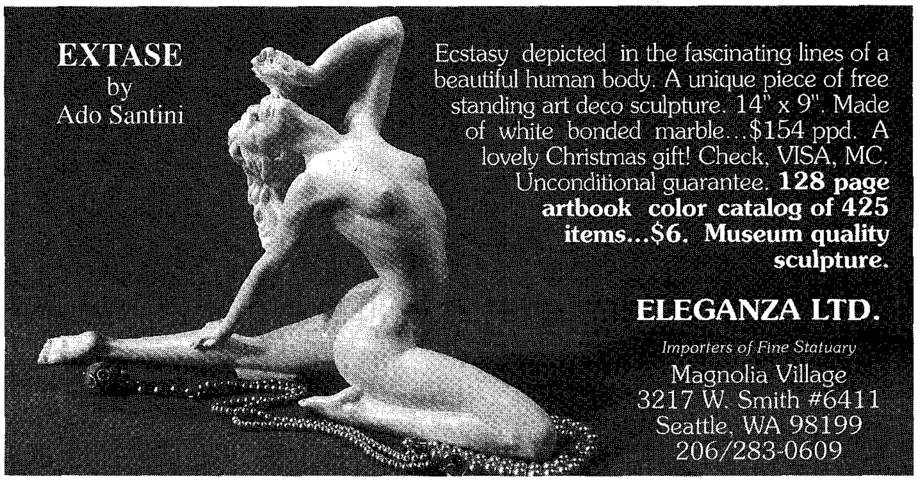
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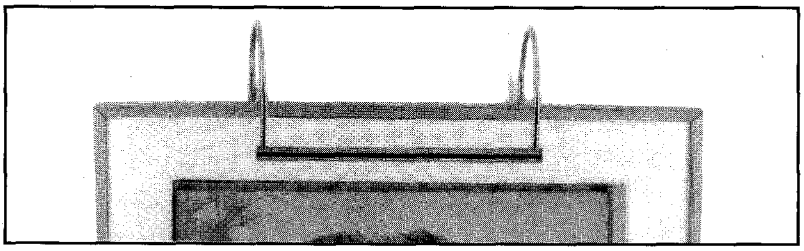
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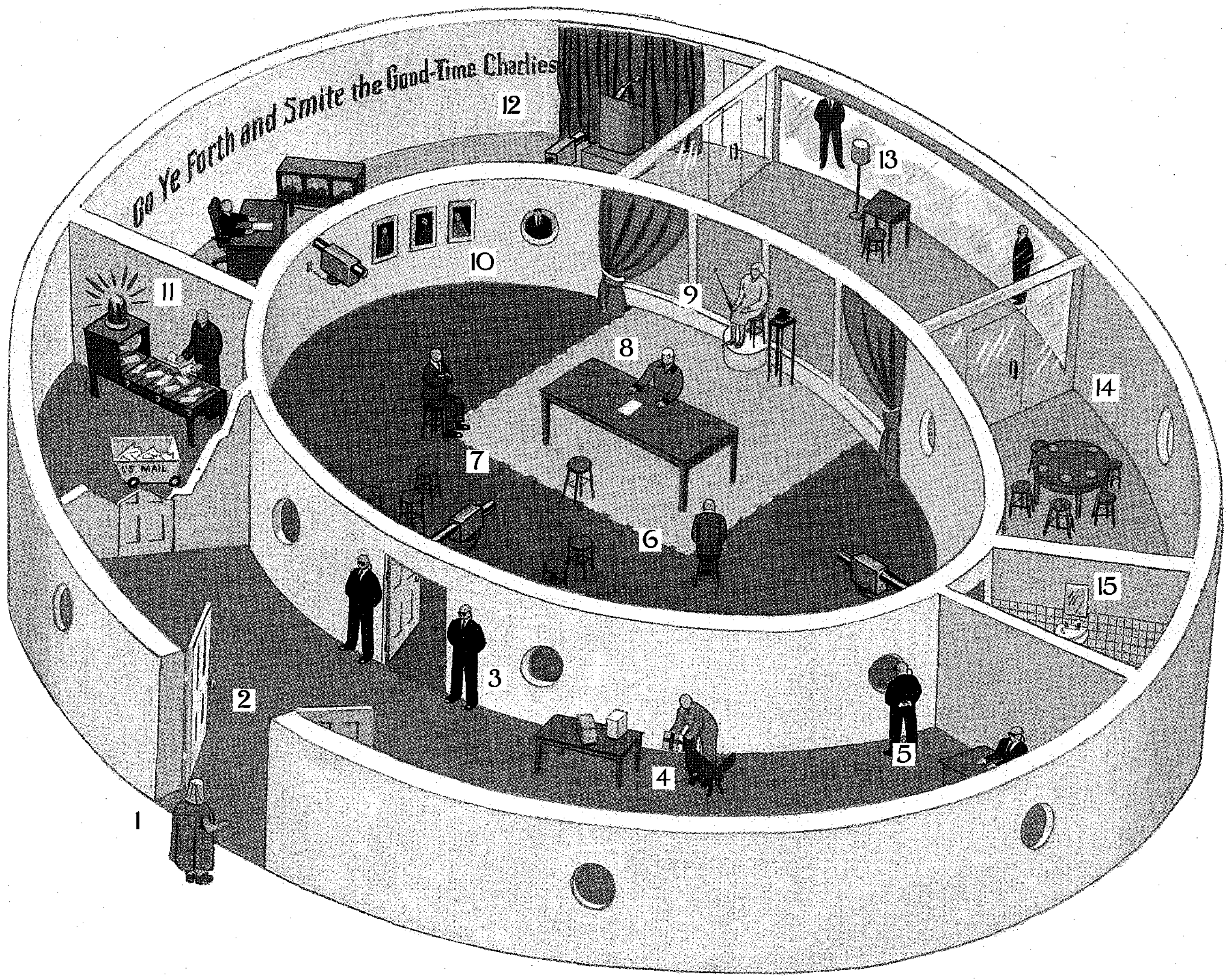
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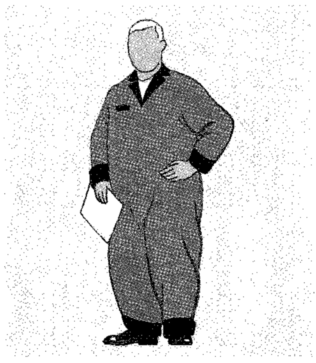

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